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VU UNIVERSITY AMSTERDAM

SHIFTING SPECIES IN SOUTH AFRICA
Wildlife Policy, Rural Consequences

By
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VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT

SHIFTING SPECIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Wildlife Policy, Rural Consequences

ACADEMISCH PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad Doctor aan
de Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam,
op gezag van de rector magnificus
prof.dr. F.A. van der Duyn Schouten,
in het openbaar te verdedigen
ten overstaan van de promotiecommissie
van de Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen
op dinsdag 10 februari 2015 om 15.45 uur
in het auditorium van de universiteit,
De Boelelaan 1105

door

Dhoya Snijders

geboren te Lelystad

promotor: prof.dr. H. Ghorashi

copromotoren: dr. M.J. Spierenburg

dr. H. Wels

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| Preface | 7 |
| Chapter I Opening..... | 13 |
| Chapter II Organizing Wild Property | 35 |
| Chapter III A New Farming Game | 64 |
| Chapter IV ‘n Boer maak ‘n Plan | 101 |
| Chapter V A Rush of Blood | 148 |
| Chapter VI Making up Species | 193 |
| Chapter VII Fifty Shades of Green | 225 |
| Chapter VIII Closing | 248 |
| Bibliography | 261 |
| List of Acronyms and Abbreviations | 276 |
| Politiek Dier – Nederlandse Samenvatting | 277 |
| About the Author | 286 |

Preface

I expected to see wildlife when flying into South Africa, but not so soon. And not so abundant. When first flying to South Africa I stepped into a full plane that had no more aisle or window seats. Cramped into a middle seat I found a British wildlife painter, who was headed for a private game reserve to teach and be inspired, on my left. On my right was a Dutch businessman who planned to top off his stay with a safari in the Kruger. I told them about my research on wildlife policy and its rural consequences. Soon after taking off the screens in front of us displayed a nature documentary about a pack of surikats. A magazine in the seat pocket had a special section on whale watching. It also advertised tented safari camps, which lured one 'to experience the romantic Africa of yesteryear in luxury and comfort'. 'Outdoor showers, Jacuzzis and private pools spell ROMANCE!', it said.

Upon landing I found out that one need not be a naturalist or professional hunter to spot game at Johannesburg International Airport. Only a few steps from the plane there were herds of bucks turned into rugs, zebras which now served as cushions, boots made out of crocodile leather, purses consisting of ostrich leather and venison steaks served on hot plates. I was welcomed by a live size elephant artwork that featured as the logo of a local liquor, by crisps packets that were imprinted with roaring lions and ads for a delivery company that showed cheetahs to accentuate its speed of delivery. T-shirts, postcards, pens, paintings, sculptures, placemats, cups, all presented wildlife. South African sport merchandise, most famously of the national rugby team the Springboks, but also of local teams such as the Sharks, Bulls, or Cheetahs, was recognizable from far by their animal emblems. Advertisements on the wall brought wilderness decorum closer by. Placards were filled with vast plains, romantic sunsets, lush waterfalls, dramatic mountain ranges and were distorted only by brand names and slogans. Other posters showed tear-jerking animals, which were set up to be awareness campaigners and cried out at tourists to be conscientious with wildlife: 'if you don't buy, we don't die'!¹

The connection between South African society and wildlife is perhaps most clearly spelled out at the bank teller. As one commands Rands² from the machine, one's Euros, yens, or dollars are transformed into a parade of printed wild beasts, which are carefully sorted, piled, and transferred to you. All of South Africa's wildlife star cast, commonly known as the Big Five, are present. The rhinoceros watches over the 10 rand note, Elephants are on the 20, Lions

¹ Think Twice campaign by the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT)

² As of July 21, 2014, 1 Euro equals 14,35 Rands.

on the 50, Cape Buffaloes on the 100 and Leopards mark the 200 rand bill.³ The other sides of the notes depict the leading economic sectors: agriculture, mining, manufacturing, tourism, transport and communication. After paying with the notes, they break into loose change with depictions of kudus, gnus, springbucks, birds or flowers. Before leaving the airport it dawned on me that wildlife is knotted into the heart of South Africa's economy, in myriad ways. Over the next few years I set out to untie some of these knots. This dissertation is the result.

Before I start I would like to note that these knots could not be untied by myself alone. I would like to thank a number of persons who showed me new ways to look at knots, who gave me insight in entanglements, helped pull strings, fasten concepts and loosen tension.

Firstly, this work would not be if it was not for Harry Wels. After attending his lectures as a bachelor's student I knew I wanted to visit Southern Africa and read, write, study, and talk about it. What is more is that once I approached him, he enabled it. Under his supervision I travelled to Pretoria for half a year in 2005 and did research on affirmative action on the South African labour market (Snijders, 2006). When I spoke to him after graduation, he triggered me to get involved in research on interspecies relationships in South Africa. This work is the outcome. I could write a lot about the inspiration I gained from working with Harry, the support he gave to push me to bring this trajectory to an end, and the excitement we shared, but for now I will leave you with one anecdote which illustrates our pooled passion. In February 2011 we met up in Kwazulu Natal to host a workshop on game farm conversions for research respondents. We came to share a room and as we unpacked our bags and took out the book we had brought for leisure reading we looked at each other and laughed. Without ever talking about it, we had both brought exactly the same book, 'When Species Meet' (Haraway, 2007). Harry, you have been a truly inspirational force in my life and have showed me what brightness can come about when species meet.

Halleh Ghorashi, undoubtedly, was constitutional for this work. Another inspirational force from my student times, our professional paths crossed again when we visited a conference on 'Classification & its consequences' in Durban. Together with Dvora Yanow we travelled to Hluhluwe game reserve, the oldest proclaimed natural park in Africa, and had close encounters with elephants as well as each other. I will never forget our late night 'braai' there, in which we improvised everything from cutlery to seasoning. Thankful I am to you especially Halleh for stepping in as my promotor when I found myself in a PhD-pickle and started to lose grip

³ For decades no human featured on South Africa's currency, just wildlife, but by the end of my fieldwork in 2012 South Africa's former president Nelson Mandela joined the Big Five.

on the trajectory. Working with you gave me the focus and energy that was needed to export my beliefs and findings to paper.

Very special thanks go out to Marja Spierenburg who involved me in the project from a very early stage and was always available for questions, advice, readings, comments and support. From Groningen to the Cape, thank you for all those good times we wine, dined, and mined data. Then there is Femke Brandt, who cannot simply be classified as a former colleague. She has traversed between the categories colleague, housemate, sports coach, mirror, rival, and above all, friend. Heidi Dahles I wish to thank for all the work she put into this project; your dissertation 'Men in Green' taught me how to fit in with hunters in South Africa and with social scientists back home. I loved working with Shirley Brooks on papers and projects; sometimes we would not see each other for months and then a single day would be filled with email-exchanges that could easily constitute a book chapter. The rest of the 'farmdwellers project group'; Lungisile Ntsebeza, Nancy Andrew, Nomalanga Mkhize, Jenny Josefson, Tariro Kamuti, Vincent Zungu, and Mngqobi Ngubane, I would sincerely like to thank for all the contributions to earlier drafts of my work and for being such stimulating people to work with.

Besides project members many thanks go out to colleagues I met at the VU at the department of Organisational Sciences. From my first days as a student in Amsterdam up until now I have always felt at home in the corridors of the department. Dvora, you have always helped me to 'push boundaries'. The species picture you gave me is still on the wall looking down at me, ready to instigate questions and meaning. Your framework on classifications constantly leads me to question government practices in my current work as a policy advisor. I found the Organizational Sciences PhD Club, led by Sytze Kingma, to be a wonderful platform in which thoughts could be shared and grown without worrying if these ideas were good, worthy, or scientific enough. I especially enjoyed the discussions, coffee breaks, and drinks with Anne, Sander, Gea, Karen, Nicole, Sothy, Myrte, Hanneke, Henk, Ismintha, Sylvia and Michiel. Halleh's IDI-platform made me feel very welcome after I 'returned' to academia after formally leaving the VU. I always felt very close the SAVUSA bunch within the VU, and spent many coffee breaks in their office. Saskia Stehouwer, I want to thank you in particular for the dollops of friendship and support you served. With you and the rest of the 'fresh perspectives' crew (Nana, Donya, Femke, and Karen) we created one of my all-time favourite conferences, which continues to serve as a great discursive space to exchange inspiration within the faculty. Frans Kamsteeg and Sierk Ybema, every time someone makes a remark about the heat I think of the time we went running through the Karoo desert and smoke almost came out of our ears: great memories indeed. So many more colleagues come to mind; Carel, Ida, Marcel,

Alfons, Therese, Juliette, Thérèse, and those who slip my mind: thank you all. Elles Bandringa and Welmoed Kuipers, without you I wouldn't have been able to navigate through the bureaucratic bends of the university. You have helped me out countless times and I want to thank you very much for that.

Besides VU-colleagues a whole network of international colleagues helped me sharpen my work. In particular I want to mention the Lund-bunch, a group of likeminded scholars I bumped into in Lund such as Crystal Fortwrangler, Jim Igoe, Scott Prudham, Dan Brockington, Caroline Seagle and Bram Büscher who generated welcome sparks in my thinking and reading. My CERES colleagues, with whom I spent a great course on fieldwork methodology and struck friendships that lasted throughout the PhD-trajectory, deserve a word of recognition as well. John Dupré, who taught a course in philosophy of the life sciences at the UvA, opened up my eyes to the philosophical dimensions of categorization and the promiscuous realism we adhere to. Pieter van Niekerk and Lance van Sittert, I want to thank you for making my visit to South Africa and the universities of NMMU and UCT formally possible.

A special word of thanks goes out to all the respondents who made this work what it is. Magdel Boshoff, you introduced me to government platforms as a 'VIP from the Netherlands' and was never reluctant to share information or ideas. Thembinkosi Tyali, Deon Furstenburg, Jan van der Walt, Reinhardt Holtshauzen, Andrew Conroy and so many others went out of their way to help me answer my endless list of questions. I want to thank those respondents who attended the stakeholder workshops in Cradock and Port Elizabeth Eastern Cape February 2011 for willing to enter a dialogue without boundaries. Jacques Greeff I want to thank for being my hunting commander. Although he once threatened to cut off my testicles with his sharpest knife if I were to publish delicate information, he gave me a welcoming slap on the shoulders afterwards and treated me as a royal guest.

I could not be more content with the everlasting love and support that my friend taxonomy provided me with. Besides the COM-crew, my philosophy friends, colleagues from Amsterdam FM, Studenten TV, SSRA, BKB, PBLQ, and those who have remained close from 'Papecity' and Biscarosse, there are dozens of individuals who cannot be grouped: thank you all for providing me with much-needed distraction and simply being wonderful. A special word of thanks goes out to Kelly and Josanne who I have been huge fans of for years and years and who, without a shred of doubt, agreed to take on the daunting role of 'paranympe'. Kelly furthermore designed the cover and helped arrange the layout in a wonderful manner and on too short a notice.

I see family, finally, as one of nature's masterpieces and mine is brushed with adoration. Wout, Derval, Nōinīn, I cherish our close connections and feel that 'home is wherever I'm with you'. When I landed in South Africa for the first time, I remember calling you to report I was ok and you said: 'you know you have family there in South Africa, right?'. I did not, but what a wonderful family branch this turned out to be. Bonny, Gilbert, Britta, thanks for putting me up whenever I was in Johannesburg, Capetown, London or Cambridge, and thanks for putting a smile on my face each time we met.

Last of all I want to thank Davinia. You are undoubtedly my most cherished research finding. No matter where I go, I know that I will always keep discovering you.

shift•ing: /ʃɪftɪŋ/ – verb

1. to put (something) aside and replace it by another or others; to change or exchange.
2. to transfer from one place, position, person, etc., to another.

spe•cies: /ˈspiʃiːz,-siz/ –noun

A group of closely related and interbreeding living things.

Chapter I Opening

So, what is a wild animal? Is it a natural resource, is it an intrinsic organism, a corporeal peril, an economic rival, a conservation goal, or is it a business opportunity? What makes an animal ‘wild’? Its characteristics, temperament, condition, locality, looks, proximity to humans or is it just the name? The pallet of answers that South Africa has given to these questions has caused many shifts in the country’s landscape as well as to individual livelihoods. People, both individuals and communities, have infamously been put aside because of ideas about conservation (Beinart, 2008; Carruthers, 1995; Spierenburg, Steenkamp, & Wels, 2008; West, Igoe, & Brockington, 2006). Crops, trees and rivers have been relocated from one place to another to produce new natures. Earth has been converted from wilderness to pastures, to barren land, to hunting grounds, to national parks, to urban landscapes, and to tourism habitat. Species have been exchanged for different species, and lives have been repositioned throughout the nation. Thousands of kilometres of wildlife fences have been erected to protect species, to claim ownership over them, and to keep unwelcome others out of their habitat (Snijders, 2012; Spierenburg & Wels, 2006; Wels, 2003). As a shift in governance in 1994 traded white nationalism for an ideal of non-racial democracy, landscape shifting did all but cease. The ‘new’ South Africa aims to redistribute land so that land ownership is more representative of the country’s population (cf. Ntsebeza & Hall, 2007; cf. O’Laughlin, Bernstein, Cousins, & Peters, 2013). It sets out to redistribute wealth, careers, culture, degrees and politics. It aspires to be the agricultural leader - the ‘bread basket’ - of Africa by producing flourishing and efficient agricultural landscapes (cf. Cousins & Hall, 2014). Bound to international agreements, it also plans to conserve large slices of land for wildlife (e.g. DEAT/SANBI 2008). South Africa exhibits many ambitions that involve landscape shifting.

This body of work uses private conversions to what I call Wildlife-Based Land Use (WBLU from here on) as a lens to look into the social dynamics of post-apartheid South Africa. WBLU holds diverse business models and characterizations, but the commonality is that it is an extensive form of land-use in which income is derived from wildlife (whether through tourism, hunting, meat production or breeding). As such, it has been recognized as the most expanding land-related activity of the last decades (Du Toit, 2007; Smith & Wilson, 2002; The National Agricultural Marketing Council, 2006). The shift has received little scholarly attention however, and has been largely left aside by policy-makers. A possible reason for this is that the trend cannot easily be pigeonholed in the existing legislative boxes of agriculture, environmental affairs, tourism or economic development.

The conversions to WBLU will in this work be described as two sorts of shifts that are inextricably linked to each other; a material shift and a politico-legal shift. The material, corporeal shift replaces domesticated species by wildlife species, substitutes crops by bush, heightens livestock fencing to game fencing, exchanges farmers by safari outfitters and farm workers by trackers, skimmers, and hospitality staff. The second, less-visible, shift is a politico-legal one. On official paper, species that were once considered 'wild' have now been labelled 'domesticated', species that were once 'vermin' have been redefined to be 'critically endangered', species that were once illegal to hunt are now being bred for just that purpose. Almost all South African species have recently been politically tied into property regimes by new legal frameworks. Such shifting, which grasps hold of much of South Africa's land and in some cases has the power to clear it of humans and dwellings did not come to a halt after the fall of apartheid. On the contrary, South Africa has never experienced as much species shifting as it does currently.

Wildlife Politics and Theory

Before delving deeper into South African contexts, let us first place these issues in a more abstract, theoretical context. The question 'what wildlife is' has been answered by many different epistemic communities. Life scientists have constructed intricate taxonomies, descriptions and theories to obtain an academic grip on organisms. By no means is the practice of categorizing species exclusive to the realm of biology and the life sciences (Ereshefsky, 2005). We all uphold so-called 'folk taxonomies' - popular societal category-systems in which we describe animals as either beautiful, ugly, scary, tasty, or smelly. Besides academic and folk taxonomies, by means of incessant political processes, each contemporary state produces its own 'official animal taxonomies'. These are category-systems that are 'officially adapted or approved by the state and incorporated into law and administration' by which means all animal species are administered (Starr, 1992, p. 263). They transform continually by means of attempts to define rules, regulations and legal standings concerning the interactions between humans and animals. Species are defined and redefined to play different roles in society: as leisure resources, wildlife commodities, hostile savages, lungs of the nation or jobs for the poor (sometimes all at once). All these meanings have from the outset been stage-managed to meet specific requirements and each meaning has particular consequences for the way land, humans and wildlife are arranged (Cronon in Callicott & Nelson, 1998, p. 473). Through the framing of species in terms of policy, animal classification systems have powerful societal ripple

effects. By influencing economies, livelihoods, landscapes and politics, they shape human-nature relationships as well as human-human relationships.

In South Africa, as well as in most other nations, organisms are boxed as either humans or non-humans. Subsequently, the most principal taxonomical dichotomy regarding non-humans is formed by the distinction between *domesticated* species and *wild* species. The two categories are rigidly separated by law, administration and institutions. Wildlife falls under the Department of Environmental Affairs, domesticated animals fall under the Department of Agriculture. Wildlife is to be protected, while domesticated animals are ‘to be improved’.⁴ Wildlife is regarded as common property; domesticated animals belong to individual owners. Wildlife has traditionally been classified as *res nullius*, as things that belonged to nobody, while domesticated animals have been tradable as *res commercio*. South African agricultural policy has listed cattle, equine, sheep, goats, poultry ‘and any other species of animals which the Minister may by notice in the *Gazette* specify’ as species that are by definition domesticated (Animal Identification Act No.6 of 2002). Non-listed species fall under environmental legislation and thereby belong to the somewhat ambiguous realm of ‘biodiversity’.⁵

Whether an animal is to be treated as domestic or as wild matters financially. Hence, the manner in which animals are classified is important as it may determine who has access to such financial sources and who does not. Under colonial administration and apartheid, the history chapter (III) shows, indigenous communities were structurally and increasingly detached from wildlife. I show that after independence South Africa’s wildlife laws were hardly debated or repealed, but were in many ways fortified. Whereas diamonds, gold, platinum, land and agriculture have always been central to discussions concerning access and inequality in South Africa, wildlife is barely one.⁶ Public debates on wildlife do take place, but mainly revolve around animal rights and poaching issues. The question which livelihood is improved and which one is frustrated by wildlife utilization is practically vacant.

With the rise of a large-scale commercial form of wildlife-based production, official wildlife taxonomies have become the heavily contested focus of landowners, conservation officials and environmental civil society organisations. By looking at the wildlife politics between these groups and the official taxonomies that are the outcome of these politics, this

⁴ See for example the respective preambles of the Animal Improvement Act and the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, No. 10 of 2004.

⁵ Ambiguous as it entails ‘all of biology’, but in policy and public debate generally leaves out many biological entities (such as humans and domesticated animals).

⁶ Note that this is context-specific as wildlife does take a more central place in national debates in other African countries such as Kenya and Tanzania.

dissertation shows that species are traversing back and forth between categories. In doing so new species are being created, existing ones are demolished, the concept of nature is altered and, above all, human relations are redefined.

Clearly, animals do not traverse from one category to another by choice; humans and their interactions are at the centre of their continuous rearrangement. The people that influence the material and politico-legal shifts as well as the people that are influenced by these shifts are at the centre of this book. The shifters have countless motivations for altering landscapes and wildlife definitions. That is, wildlife may now be categorized as private property, as farm animals, as aliens, invasive species, as Cites category 1,2 or 3, as vulnerable, protected, endangered, critically endangered, exotic, high-profile or damage causing – and these are merely a handful of the official categories one finds in the Republic. All these categories have frameworks of incentives and deterrents attached to them. The frameworks stipulate regulated conventions that preside over the interactions between humans and animals. Most prominently, these incentives and deterrents comment on the utilization of animals by humans. Can one legally kill an elephant? Can one transport a buffalo from South Africa to the Netherlands? What body parts may be traded? May one live on the same land as wildlife? Should there be fences to keep certain wildlife species and what should these look like? Can one hunt kudu in November? Can one breed and trade live lions? Such questions, which delineate how species are absorbed into market economies, dominate wildlife politics. The following paragraph intends to introduce some of the key actors and their positions in relation to each other within the South African wildlife force field.

Public Private Relations

Historically, the most powerful state organ dealing with wildlife production was the Department of Agriculture (DoA). Jane Carruthers has stated that essentially the department was set up to create ‘a neo-Europe, giving attention to export crops and agrarian research rather than promoting the use of indigenous fauna and flora’ (2008:169). During the apartheid years (1948-1994) the state body protected conventional agricultural industry, ‘white farmers, not blacks’, and had been ‘inimical to any interface between game and domestic stock’ (ibid.). Over the past few decades the DoA has recognized the emergence of a wildlife production

sector and has created various policies to support it.⁷ In one of its few publications on policy for game farming it states that uniform policy and legislation is lacking (Department of Agriculture, 2006, p. 27). With the transition to democracy and ANC rule in 1994, the DoA changed its goals and committed itself to economic reform policy as well as to land reform. This year also marked the formation of the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, which was conceived to promote the conservation of natural resources to enhance economic growth. To work together with government the wildlife sector was hereby forced to align with 'new' societal goals and measures such as market-based land reform, redistributional targets, poverty alleviation and (inter)national conservation policy. Draper writes that white man's 'colonial role as the game keeper and warden who forcibly withheld natural resources from Africans' became apparent and contested after the fall of apartheid (Draper, 1998, p. 801). Nevertheless, twenty years of 'non-racialised democratic' rule under the ANC have not been successful in reforming the agricultural or environmental sectors, which remain predominantly white and male. According to WRSA-estimates only two percent of the wildlife-sector is non-white and this distribution is reflected in representative bodies as well: 'unfortunately we are mainly a white organization' (Interview A. Pretorius, 2009). The small number of black farmers who are involved in wildlife production are supposedly not rural farmers, but businessmen or so-called 'wijdbeens wildboeren' (literally: wide-legged game farmers) who have one 'leg' on the farm, and one leg in a city (possibly an international one).⁸ The deputy president of the ANC and once-to-be successor of Nelson Mandela, Cyril Ramaphosa, for example, has a game ranch in Limpopo and is heavily involved in wildlife stud breeding (Magubane, 2014).

Through the unequal composition in terms of race, gender and class, it is understandable that wildlife reserves have come to be a topic of relative political heat. Historians show that in South Africa wildlife hunting, conservation, management and production have developed as important signifiers of class over the last century (Beinart & Coates, 1995; Carruthers, 1994). Neumann explains that this may be attributed to wildlife's 'symbolic importance for the construction of an identity for European settlers' (Neumann 1998:31).⁹ However, in promoting the wildlife industry, production-oriented voices attempt to re-interpret this identity.

⁷ The most relevant being; The Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act, 1983 (Act 43 of 1983); Animal Diseases Act, 1984 (Act 35 of 1984); Marketing of Agricultural Products Act, 1996, as amended by Act 59 of 1997 and Act 34 of 2001; Meat Safety Act, 2000, (Act 40 of 2000); Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act 10 of 2004).

⁸ Various respondents revealed that this practice, in which the owner appoints a daily manager to run the reserve, is common in South African private wildlife management.

⁹ Arguably, such narratives are reproduced in the debates on the 'Springbok Emblem', which is used by South African national sports teams. Despite being an iconic emblem for the national rugby team, it is seen as a signifier that divides. "Minister, I want you to observe the arrogance of white people on the Springbok emblem,"

Much could be done to promote hunting among other cultural groups in South Africa. To achieve this it is important to get prominent people, like ministers and businessmen, involved in hunting ... with a view to supporting skills training of members of previously disadvantaged cultures. This would expedite their mainstreaming in the wildlife sector and would boost demand by black hunters (The National Agricultural Marketing Council, 2006, p. 14).

Currently, the government has not solidified the position of wildlife producers and it remains unclear whether the wildlife sector falls under the DoA or the DEA. As a prominent industry researcher told me ‘all domestic animals fall under agriculture, while wild animals fall under environmental affairs, irrespective of what you are doing with them while alive’ (interview dr. Du Toit, 2008). This has caused a field of tension between the two departments, which both have separate wildlife management divisions and visions. DEAT has historically argued that the privatized approach to wildlife management is potentially detrimental to wildlife conservation and pursues ‘joint management and scientific monitoring arrangements agreed to between government, national and provincial park authorities and private landowners, and monitoring of the allocation of any revenues generated through hunting towards conservation’ (K. C. D. Hamman, Lloyd, & Stadler, 2005). DoA seems to have embraced a path of privatization and production and sees ‘wilderness’ and ‘wildlife’ as ‘commercial assets on which enterprise, investment and growth should be built’ (Ashley & Wolmer, 2003, p. 5 and see; 2010, p. 5). In its own words, it has initiated policy drafts to ‘cover the current anomalies and shortfalls hampering the development of a viable game farming sector’ (ibid., Ramsey, 2008, p. 28). DoA’s policy initiatives thus include state deregulations and public-private partnerships with wildlife associations. The union of wildlife ranchers WRSA is an important one of these partners and is not always at ease with its current relations with conservation oriented policymakers. This shows by its disapproving reactions to conservation policy such as the creation of endangered species lists:

I can’t convince you of game farming if I cannot guarantee that the species you buy this year will have market value next year. If you are breeding sables and are not allowed to sell them next year because they are on some government list, how can you survive? Also, as a game farmer you will pay eight times more land tax than a normal farmer! [...] Why are we placed in another section than farmers? (Interview A. Pretorius, 2008).

Sports Portfolio Committee chairman Komphela told delegates on October 9 (“Springbok emblem could be history”, SABC News, October 2008).

Representatives of wildlife producers seem eager to become ‘regular farmers’ and to have their industry represented by the DoA to avoid unnecessary environmental regulations (Dry, 2013, p. 3; National Workshop on the Draft Game Farming Policy, September 2006). It is questionable however whether wildlife producers from all modes of production assent to this. One can loosely distinguish ecotourism reserves, hunting reserves, and wildlife breeding and meat-production farms, although they are typically combined. These different farms take up different wildlife visions and have different relationships with government depending on their business models (cf. Snijders, 2014). In general industry-government relationships are tense however. In a personal interview, one game farmer stated that:

In South Africa there are thirty two sets of regulations for game farmers that you have to abide to, thirty two different sets of legislation. That means: fifteen from conservation and ten from agriculture. It’s tax, security, forestry, water; thirty two in total! (Interview R.Venter, 2009).

Besides this turbulent relationship between the wildlife sector and government, the sector finds itself politically divided as well. WRSA has claimed a position as ‘the voice of game farming’, but with 1600 members (out of a suggested 9500 game farmers) it has not united the sector. The manager of the sizeable Eastern Cape Game Management Association (ECGMA) for instance, told me that with other unions, it does not and will not endorse the WRSA because of political reasons and personal discords (Interview D. van Heerden, 2008).

Privatization of Wildlife in South Africa

In the Republic of South Africa, the commercialization of wildlife has gone further than in most other nations. Whereas wildlife was before at the fringe of the economic sphere, with the rise of tourism, hunting, and wildlife trading, it has been moving towards the heart of it. It is difficult to quantify the economic force of wildlife in South Africa. Dr Cloete of the NWU Environmental Unit estimates that for breeding wildlife alone six billion Rands was earned in 2012, while in 2013:

‘the exceptional increase in average prices of plains game groups and the many high-value animals and colour variants that were traded on official sales, contributed to the highest official game auction turnover in history. Not only did these auctions reach the billion rand mark, but they also achieved the most record prices in a specific year’ (Bezuidenhout, 2014).

The Department of Environmental Affairs notes that it gains almost one billion Rands from ‘species fees’ and ‘daily rates’ for hunting alone (Carrol 2010), and various literature points out that South Africa has the biggest wildlife industry on the continent (Damm, 2005). South African wildlife is additionally capitalized upon as meat, trophies, luxury articles, souvenirs, films and magazines, for trading, breeding, stocking, investing and so forth. For this economic shift to happen wildlife is continuously adopting new societal roles.

As the former Minister Van Schalkwyk of Environmental Affairs avowed at a Professional Hunters gala dinner, ‘game farming and hunting contribute significantly to conservation, tourism development, job creation and sustainable development in rural areas’. At the end of his speech he recapped his optimism about the industry’s future ‘and the great potential to further nurture and promote its economic and conservation worth’ (Van Schalkwyk, 2007). The Minister hereby sets out a line of thought that runs through this dissertation’s analysis of wildlife policy in South Africa. Bakker calls it ‘market environmentalism’ (Bakker, 2005, 2007), while others frame it in a debate on the ‘neoliberalisation of nature’(Büscher, 2013; Castree, 2007a, 2007b; Duffy & Moore, 2010; McCarthy & Prudham, 2004). This body of literature shows how human-nature relationships, facilitated by new property frameworks, are being commercialised and transformed to meet the dynamics of capitalism. In this process, economic mechanisms and the deployment of markets are brought forward as the solution to environmental problems (Bakker, 2007, p. 431). In interviews that I had with wildlife representatives the problem of declining species numbers was habitually summarized in the slogan ‘if it pays, it stays’ (Interview P.Steyn, 2010).

In a country in which poverty and unemployment are rife, the cocktail of privatization, marketization and conservation has equally been deployed to promote economic development. Many narratives about hunting and ecotourism have been employed to show its beneficial workings (K. C. D. Hamman et al., 2005; Langholz & Kerley, 2006; Lindsey, Alexander, Frank, Mathieson, & Romanach, 2006; Lindsey, Roulet, & Romanach, 2007). Pro-industry voices state that tourist industries make valuable contributions to the overall economy. It is argued that these industries employ many persons and contribute to skill-development. Private wildlife enclosures are framed as ‘tourist traps’ that bring holiday-makers to remote regions in which they will spend on local business. Simultaneously, these enclosures are to inspire local people to become conservationists and create environmentally sustainable livelihoods. They are deemed to have less of an ecological impact than conventional agriculture or other forms of land use, and thereby also reply to South Africa’s critical debate on soil erosion. For visitors

these ‘game farms’ are marketed as providing a soothing aesthetical or even a spiritual experience for those who have busy lives in big cities (Interview A.Pretorius, Boardmember WRSA 2009; Brooks, Spierenburg, & Wels, 2012).

Critics of wildlife reserves have been firing potent ammunition at such arguments. Brockington et al. for example state that they ‘cause eviction and physical displacement; they cause economic displacement, denying people access to fuel, thatching grass, lumber, meat and diverse resources’ (Brockington, Duffy, & Igoe, 2008, p. 73). The presence of different, often unfamiliar, species such as lions, rhinoceroses and elephants can lead to physical hazards for those working and living on the land (Brandt, 2013). Instead of gaining opportunities and income, many employees are reported to now have more chores for less pay. And, as anthropologist Jim Igoe shows, the cost-benefit scale is often skewed. Benefits to local people mostly come in the form of training and skill development, while costs come in terms of restricted access to natural resources (2006). Igoe argues that in rural areas that are characterized by high levels of poverty, training skills may well be beneficial, but are not usually as direct and immediate as benefits from the environment are. His study and others with similar insights (Ghimire & Pimbert, 1997; Spierenburg, Steenkamp, & Wels, 2006; Walpole & Thouless, 2005), study the social consequences of wildlife on *public* land. Less is known about the socio-economic impact of *private* wildlife producers (For an exception see Andrew, Brandt, Spierenburg, Snijders, & Mkhize, 2013; Wels, 2003), which is the topic of this work.

What is good to remember in studying this topic is that wildlife reserves, whether private or public, hardly ever do just one of the above. Instead ‘they distribute fortune and misfortune at the same time’ and all the time (Brockington et al., 2008, p. 73). This makes wildlife politics, and its intrinsically connected land politics, vibrant as well as multifarious. Whether one speaks in the name of conservation, in the name of development, or in the name of marketization, wildlife politics never come straightforward. Because of the on-going expansion of the wildlife industry and the widening economic gap between the rural privileged and deprived, it is especially timely and necessary to look into the social impacts of private wildlife production in South Africa.

Research Questions

The dynamic complexity involving the politics of wildlife privatization, its relationship with the land question and its socio-economic consequences to rural South Africans leads us to the central quest of this dissertation:

How is wildlife officially classified in South Africa and what social consequences does this have?

To pursue this quest, four guiding sub-questions were developed:

- a. How did South Africa's distinctive rules and regulations regarding wildlife ownership historically and politically develop and what consequences did shifting power relations during South Africa's 1994 transition to democracy have on these rules and regulations?
- b. What is the scale of South Africa's land-based conversions to wildlife utilization and what are the driving forces behind them?
- c. What organizations and institutions currently operate within the field of wildlife politics and how do they advance their positions in relation to each other?
- d. What perspectives do various wildlife producers, representatives and policymakers have on the sector's relation to rural development?

Structuring the Dissertation

To explore these research questions, **Chapter two** details key themes of this work and grounds the main theoretical concepts in South Africa's rich contexts. This chapter particularly comments on and relates to the 'organization of wild property'; it is theoretically structured by these three concepts – organization, wild, and property - which are closely related. It firstly describes how contemporary nature can be seen as a result of organization and negotiation between various stakeholders who act in an organizational field. Secondly, it focuses on the subject of these negotiations – the wild – in an attempt to address the question what wild things are today. Thirdly it deals with sought after outcomes of discussions on the wild, namely property or control over it, and places this discussion in political contexts of neoliberalization. All three concepts run through the book as a red thread. By inquiring under what conditions particular perspectives were produced, received, reproduced, shifted and facilitated by policy, this approach aims to lead to a view of state-society relations that takes seriously both history and power relations (cf. Leach, Mearns, & Scoones, 1999, p. 227).

History provides context, reveals archaeological residue that is of influence today, but also offers a longitudinal focus and thereby gives insight into the working of continuing

mechanisms of natural privatization. **Chapter three** therefore historically describes different modes of hunting that were prevalent in early-day South Africa. It describes the encounter of three sometimes overlapping but mostly contrasting views on human-wildlife relations, of Africans, Brits, and Afrikaners and shows how coalitions were established that had a lasting impact on South Africa's landscape and its people. The chapter comments on class struggles, the rise of rural elites, and the inception of different sets of policies: those that tied wildlife ownership to land ownership, those that proposed agricultural betterment, and those that barred certain members of society from (land and wildlife) ownership and markets. By tracking back legislative red tape to prior times, the chapter attempts to show that there was already a strong move towards privatization and commoditization of wildlife in the nineteenth century. This shift went paired with various forms of territorial enclosures that were intended to keep out unwanted animals as well as humans. By studying wildlife politics surrounding the adoption of 'game' laws, it attempts to show the recurring power of landowners to achieve exemption from wildlife restrictions and thereby the possibility to gain wildlife monopolies. The second part of this chapter comments on the period 1948-1994. It is argued that South Africa's wildlife laws were heavily fortified and attached to land ownership in this time frame. Hereby, the chapter contextualizes central themes of the dissertation such as animal ownership, classificatory consequences and unbalanced distribution of land and power. It aims to answer research question II, asking 'how South Africa's distinctive rules and regulations regarding wildlife ownership have historically and politically developed over the last century'. By scrutinizing the legal privatization, deregulation and reregulation of former commons through a framework based on category-making in public administration, it responds to recent calls for novel, analytical approaches to historical processes of neoliberalisation (cf. Bakker, 2007, p. 432; Castree, 2007b).

Chapter four functions as a bridge chapter as it links South Africa's past to current practices. After South Africa's political transition of 1994, a new government faced the paramount task of addressing poverty and inequality, besides increasing (inter)national calls for biodiversity conservation. Due to the deregulation of the market and decline of marketing boards and subsidies, landowners were forced to diversify and reposition themselves in society. As borders opened, the country was flooded with international markets, tourists, foreign investment and wildlife visions. Now, almost two decades later, a resilient critique on service delivery and lack of (rural) transformation has grown strong and is at times apt to escalate (cf. Crush, 2011). This chapter sets out to define how wildlife fits into the new South Africa.

Chapter five intends to characterize and delineate South Africa's game farms and inquire what the wildlife industry has transformed into in terms of dimensions. In effect it asks what kind of game farms there are, how they operate, how many there are, who owns a game farm, who visits one, and for what reasons. In answering these questions, I take on a two-pronged approach by on the one hand giving an in-depth account of a game farm's workings and on the other hand analyzing statistics. The first paragraph is mostly quantitative and gives insights in wildlife and commodity prices. The second part seeks to understand how wildlife is enacted as biocapital. It does so by looking into the different life phases of owned wildlife in South Africa (life, sex, death, after-death) and examines how wildlife is knotted into capital markets in these different life stages.

Like the previous chapter, **Chapter six** dissects wildlife, but now in a political manner by focusing on the construction of official wildlife categories. Taking up a model of Ian Hacking, the chapter presents a framework of 'making up species'. Rather than simply distinguishing and analyzing classifications, I aim to socially embed wildlife taxonomies by studying categories within a broader societal framework. By analyzing official wildlife taxonomies in South Africa this section thus attempts to address how categorizers use category theories to create categories and institutionally uphold them to influence the categorized. This chapter will further focus on the category names, the official knowledge that discriminates wild animals and the institutions through which this knowledge is embedded, the categorizers and the categorized, while the following chapter comments on the politics of making up species.

Chapter seven elaborates on the theme of conservation and development by studying an important wildlife policy platform. I had permission to follow the Wildlife Forum, a platform in which wildlife stakeholders meet with the Departments of Environmental Affairs and Agriculture, throughout 2009 and 2010. On the basis of gathered minutes, observations and interviews this chapter aims to give organisational ethnographic insight in the production and reproduction of wildlife policy in South Africa. The chapter specifically investigates the actors who deal with wildlife policy in South Africa and constitute state institutions. I broadly distinguish between three parties, namely government, wildlife representatives and animal welfare institutions. On closer examinations I attempt to show how these groups are internally fragmented and how different discourse coalitions are created between individuals and clusters. The chapter additionally holds a distinctive focus on debates on rural development, transformation, and specific economic transformation policies such as Black Economic Empowerment (BEE). Specific debates on these issues are examined to answer sub-question (4), namely 'what partly converging, partly conflicting perspectives do various wildlife

producers, their representatives and policymakers have on the sector's relation to rural development?'

All chapters have abridgement sections at the end to link the conclusions of the chapters to the red threads of the rest of the dissertation.¹⁰ These culminate in the **Closing** chapter in which theories of privatization, organization and classification are revisited and consolidated with the empirical material. Informed by practices from South Africa, the chapter presents an overview of mechanisms that are utilized in the current and incessant process of natural privatization. It argues that the ongoing privatization and commodification of wildlife leads to complex and unsustainable official taxonomies, as well as a situation in which wildlife, land, and humans are becoming legally attached and physically detached from one another.

Considering Methods and Field Settings

'It is by attending systematically to people's own intentions and interpretations, accessible only if one adopts the perspective of their concerns and their knowledge of the constraints under which they act, that one can start unravelling the meanings they confer on events, and thereby the experience they are harvesting' (Barth, 1993, p. 105). Instead of strictly studying the formal institutional framework of wildlife ownership, this research project starts with the perspective of people's experiences with wildlife institutions (cf. Meinzen-Dick & Pradhan, 2002, p. 2). The methodological approach that is chosen to bring together these experiences is ethnography as well as argumentative discourse analysis. What defines ethnography, Geertz states, is not the selection of informants, transcribing texts or keeping a diary, it is 'an elaborate venture in thick description' (Geertz, 1973, p. 4). This concept is derived from Gilbert Ryle's distinction between a thin description of actions -such as an eyelid contraction- and a thick description – such as a flirting wink or a smoke induced agitated eye- in which this action is produced, perceived and interpreted. What is important in giving thick descriptions is interpretation through complex specificity, through the circumstantiality of description (1973:22). For this reason, ethnography is particularly suited for showing complex social relations, exposing institutional forces and structure as they affect every day interaction (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Lauder, Brown, & Halsey, 2004, p. 14). Although ethnographic research is intensive and time-consuming, it is necessary within this research to uncover the specificity and complexity

¹⁰ As an artistic homage to the all the hunting and conservation journals that were read during the process of this research, all chapters also end with an etching of wildlife photographs by the author.

of relations between key actors, shifting power relations and the relationship between formal and informal institutions.

Discourse, following Hajer, is defined as an 'ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categories through which meaning is given to social and physical phenomena and which is produced and reproduced through an identifiable set of practices (Hajer 2006, p. 67). A discourse is thus more than a discussion; it refers to a broad discursive set of concepts and narratives. Key to argumentative discourse analysis is the examination of what is being said to whom and in what context (Hajer, 2006, p. 72). In attempt to comprehend political behaviour and institutional change this approach places language at the centre of its endeavours. As a method it breaks away from the instrumentalist positivist mode of analysis, which has been something of a paradigm in the field of public administration. Summing up the critique on the positivist approach, Fischer (Fischer, 2003, p. 10) presents a strong basis for argumentative analysis by stating that 1) rather than being objective the social sphere of policy-making is highly subjective and should be understood in this way, 2) the tendency toward prediction and generalization in positivist and empirical methods, by definition, ignores important micro-contexts in the process of aggregation, and 3) the use of positivist and empirical methods tends to unfairly exclude marginalized groups (Jones & McBeth, 2010, p. 332). Most unsympathetically positivist analysis has been summed up by Dryzek as a 'dead duck in the philosophy of science, deader still in the actual practice of science, with a stake through its heart when it comes to social science' (Dryzek 2004:89 in Jones & McBeth, 2010). Such critiques have led to an 'argumentative turn' (Fischer & Forester, 1993; Gottweis, 2006) in policy analysis in which language is seen to have the 'capacity to make politics, to create signs and symbols that can shift power-balances and that can impact on institutions and policy-making. It can render events harmless, but it can also create political conflicts' (Hajer, 2006, p. 67). This does not mean that argumentative discourse analysts do not take events or behaviour into account, but it rather focuses on how these events and behaviours are constructed textually and attain meaning through social dynamics. The decline of wildlife species for instance, may be accepted as a necessary evil in an industrial state, as a horror that must be prevented at all costs, or as an opportunity to create jobs, alleviate poverty or to mobilize funds for conservation. Although all assessments take waning animal numbers into account, different and sometimes opposing meanings are attributed to this incidence. The way in which these meanings are captured, consumed and distributed is by means of texts; these are the 'weapons' that are used to compete with others in policy fields (Chalaby, 1996, p. 694). In a 'process of bricolage, combining facts, values, assumptions, judgments, contentions,

metaphors, and other rhetorical devices’ (B. Dickson, Hutton, & Adams, 2009, p. 113), information is assembled and strategically arranged through policy narratives. Policy narratives are story lines that are created to interpret and linguistically construct the world, frame problems and come up with particular solutions (Leach et al., 1999; Roe, 1994; Stone, 2002). These narratives, which make up much of my empirical evidence, provide useful data as ‘through telling their stories, people distil and reflect a particular understanding of social and political relations’ (Feldman, Sköldberg, Brown, & Horner, 2004, p. 148). As Weick has famously claimed stories make sense of organizational life (Weick, 2012) and carry relevant information to the process of decision making (Czarniawska & Sköldberg, 2003). Because scientists, businesspersons, conservationists and politicians claim different versions of reality there is constant epistemological uncertainty and struggle between policy narratives. Evidence is often conflicting, contradictory, or sparse, and simply criticizing an existing system by appealing to empirical evidence does not always suffice (Roe, 1994; Tremblay, 2010).

The respondents that are quoted have been pseudonymised throughout this work as to disguise their identity. From February 2008 to March 2011 I consulted 135 respondents, recorded 62 interviews and made 15 farm visits in the Eastern Cape Province (varying in length from one day to two weeks). During an exploratory research trip in February 2008 several contacts were made with government departments, wildlife organizations, universities and NGO’s. After this visit a chart was constructed which highlighted actors and organisations that were central to wildlife policy debates in South Africa. This chart, as well as all other collected data, was managed and updated whilst doing research (G. Thomas & James, 2006). In treating empirical data collection as a process and studying specifically the dynamics of the research settings, narratives, key concepts and argumentative structures were coded from the first step and grouped in order to make them workable. The analysis of key concepts allowed the research to understand how actors historically developed in relationship to each other. In January 2009 I travelled to South Africa for more than a year and attempted to interview and study all members of the chart. Multi-sited ethnography (Marcus, 1995) was chosen for multiple reasons. Firstly, it is a method to highlight a “thing” or “idea” as it is moved and translated through different places. This can illustrate the interconnectedness of our increasingly globalized world, but also the schisms that are created by the translation of global ideas to local spaces and vice versa. In the case of wildlife the study focuses both on wildlife as a commodity that travels, but also on wildlife as a marketing product and a policy idea that is continuously constructed and translated to different spaces (e.g. Coleman & Von Hellermann, 2012). My time was divided between many sites in two geographical areas, Pretoria and the Cacadu region

in the Eastern Cape. In line with the idea behind multi-sited ethnography the field was thereby not merely a collection of local units, but the research attempts to show that the visited 'sites are connected with one another in such ways that the relationships between them are as important as the relationships within them' (Hannerz, 2003, p. 206).

By studying these actors I chose to cover a large part of the value chain of wildlife ranching and production. However, the scope of the dissertation is also limited and some parts of the chain were deliberately left out or could not be covered. The most important reason for this is that this dissertation presents a standalone research project which took place as part of a larger research programme in which professors alongside a post-doc and five PhD researchers have been addressing the role of the private wildlife sector in South Africa's rural development. To complement each other and create a joint bigger picture the programme was divided into three separate projects at the start. As a whole it seeks (1) to identify the institutional drives behind farm conversions to wildlife-based production, (2) to document the scale and extent of wildlife conversions through quantitative analysis and (3) to identify the social and livelihood implications of this trend for affected farm dwellers. This dissertation represents project 1 and thus aims to identify the institutional drives of South Africa's wildlife sector by conducting qualitative research amongst wildlife utilizers and wildlife-related state actors. By analyzing South Africa's force field of wildlife institutions within a broader socio-political context of post-Apartheid reform, and by gaining an in-depth understanding of these power relations by constructing thick descriptions of the daily practices of wildlife farmers and policy makers (besides this work also Kamuti, forthcoming), it connects directly to the other research projects and aims to complement the quantitative analysis of wildlife ownership (Zungu, forthcoming) as well as the qualitative study of farm dwellers who are confronted by wildlife conversions (Brandt, 2013; Mkhize, 2012).

Thus, although this dissertation only brushes upon, for instance, the livelihoods of farm dwellers and workers, the study builds on and refers to the work of co-researchers. A methodological reason for looking at policy makers and land owners and managers is that Laura Nader's call upon anthropologists to 'study up' of forty years ago still rings true (Nader & Hymes, 1972). At present there are many theoretical and critical stances on privileged, wealthy, and powerful members of society, although 'most cases remain vague about the practical workings of organized power' (Heyman, 2004, p. 437). The observation neatly fits South African debates on conservation and development. An abundance of analytical accounts on policy frameworks exist, marginalised members of society have been studied often and

thoroughly, but anthropologies of bureaucracies and involved economic elites seem lacking (although there are welcome exceptions such as de Sardan, 2013).

Policy Setting

To obtain insight in institutional interaction between the departments and wildlife producers, a large part of the fieldwork was set amongst those who engage in policy discussions and are responsible for wildlife policy. These discussions largely play out in Pretoria, where government and thus the Department of Environmental Affairs and the Department of Agriculture have their administrative centres. Agricultural unions, wildlife representatives, research bodies and NGO's are established here as well. To investigate policy makers' (divergent) perspectives on wildlife-based production and their position in relation to other actors, I made contacts in the Biodiversity and Conservation Division of the Department of Water and Environmental Affairs (DWEA¹¹) and the Veld, Forage and Wildlife Ranching Division of the Department of Agriculture. Interviews were held with policy members on various levels throughout the departments, from regular staff members to the director general. In addition to this, interviews were held with national wildlife producers' representatives (e.g. WRSA, PHASA, CHASA, SA JAG) and scientists.

Through DWEA, I was invited to attend the quarterly Wildlife Forum during the period of my fieldwork. In this platform, wildlife industry representatives discuss policy regulations and developments with representatives from DoA, DWEA and provincial Members of the Executive Council (MECs¹²). Leading up to this platform, various actors meet up with each other and their organizational bodies to discuss upcoming matters. By means of interviews before and after the Wildlife Forum I attempted to establish expectations, evaluations and strategies. This method aimed to provide insight into the levels of influence various stakeholders had during the decision making process.

¹¹ Under the previous cabinet known as the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT).

¹²The members of the executive council are elected by the provincial premier and together function as a cabinet at provincial level.



Figure 1.1: Employees at a Taxidermist, Photo by author.

Wildlife Sector Setting

Further fieldwork was done in the Cacadu district and Karoo Midlands in the Eastern Cape. This region was selected as a case study because of its high density as well as diversity of wildlife producers (who are involved in ecotourism, hunting, venison production and livestock trade). Covering 34% of the entire Eastern Cape Province's geographical footprint, the Cacadu District is the largest of the district municipalities.¹³ The presence of the largest wildlife abattoir in South Africa, a number of influential taxidermists, local wildlife associations and a wildlife producers' social club made this district particularly appealing for qualitative research. The district is home to popular South African national parks (Addo Elephant National Park and Camdeboo National Park); in the vicinity of public parks, as Travis et al have noticed (Travis, Hobson, & Schneider, 2002), transitions to wildlife-based production are especially prominent. The Eastern Cape has a largely rural population and ranks as the poorest or one of the poorest provinces of South Africa in poverty indicators (Trollip, 2011). Simultaneously, it is understood to be of great natural significance as it includes eight of South Africa's nine biomes as well as a portion of each of the three globally recognised biodiversity 'hotspots' (the Cape Floristic Region; the Succulent Karoo and the Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany hotspot). Its

¹³Cacadu is derived from the Khoikhoi word *tkakadao* (the 'c's in the name are pronounced with a click) and one interpretation gives it the meaning "place of semi-arid plains, undulating mountains and the sea". What is generally accepted is that the 'Ca' in Cacadu means 'place of' which is common to many of the Nguni languages. The Cacadu region is partly overlaps with the Karoo region, the place of thirst.

policy framework has the highest number of huntable species and nationally it ranks second in terms of income from hunting and amount of hunted animals after Limpopo Province (T. Carroll, 2010).

Taking size, access and business model into consideration, 15 farms were selected for this study by applying a snowball method – i.e. referral from initial contacts to generate additional respondents (L. A. Goodman, 2011). While this technique is sometimes criticized for introducing bias to a research population, it was necessary to deploy in this research because initial experience foretold that access to wildlife producers was based on trust and association. This was also an important reason for participating and completing the ECGMA (Eastern Cape Game Management Association) *Professional Hunting* course at a game reserve in the Eastern Cape. The intention of this exercise was to learn the game farmer's vocabulary, to spend two intensive weeks with twenty (future) professional hunters and game farmers, to build trust and to integrate in the Cacadu wildlife producer's community.

The selection of producers was inductive, whereby positions in relation to other actors in the force field were the main determinant. Informal interviews were held with various staff members (e.g. professional hunters, trackers, guards, caterers, farm workers etc.), clients (e.g. tourists, consumers), business partners (e.g. taxidermists, abattoir holders, local government)

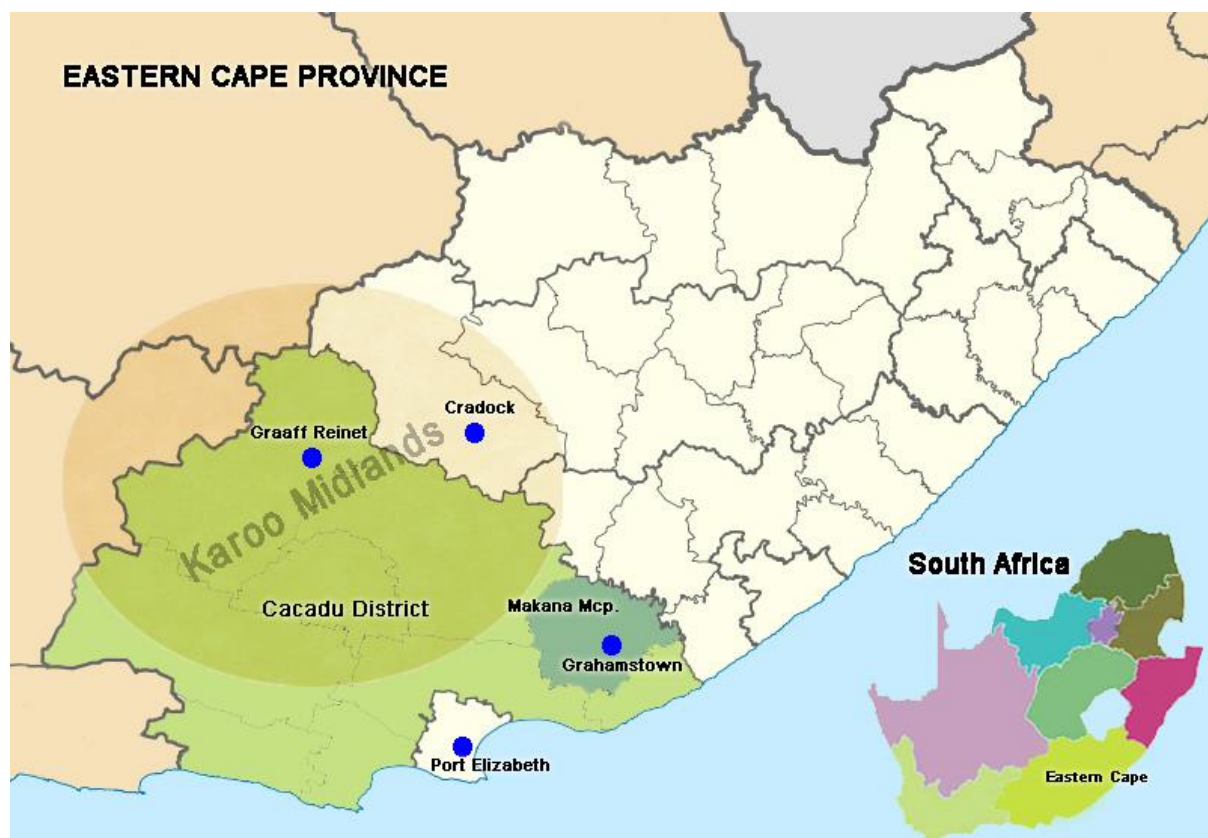


Figure 1.2: Cacadu district and Karoo Midlands. Adapted by author from www.demarcation.org.za

and farm workers and dwellers. Based on the initial literature study, two types of wildlife production were differentiated – ecotourism reserves and hunting reserves. To assess potential differences in institutional behaviour and perspectives, case studies were divided into these categories and ten hunting farms and five ecotourism reserves were visited.

Statistics on wildlife utilization were gathered and created with help from responsible government departments, through Statistics South Africa (www.statssa.gov.za) or from secondary literature. A small statistical venture was undertaken in the Cacadu district where information was extracted from a self-created database of Certificates of Adequate Enclosure, the certificates which are necessary to enclose a wildlife reserve (described in Chapter IV).

Archives

A socio-historical approach that aims to contextualize historically and politically how and under what conditions particular perspectives were produced, begs for a textual review. The question is what perspectives and what documents can and should be studied. A famous African proverb says that until the lion has its own narrator, the hunter will always have the best part of the story. Spivak translates the historian's quandary to the human realm in her article 'Can the subaltern speak?' (Spivak, 1988). She there shows the complexity of retrieving 'subaltern' narratives, as the narrative structures and archives were not drawn up by these actors. As Castree says 'the historical archive already comes to us infused with the power relations that marginalized Aleuts in the first place' (Castree in Barnes, Peck, Sheppard, & Tickell, 2008, p. 188). Historical archives thus do not only omit dead lion's narratives, they generally also lack narratives of all those who could not, or were restricted from hunting lions. This provided many knots for my historical chapters, which I attempted but not always succeeded in disentangling.

The records of the Department of Agriculture in the National Archives, Pretoria, especially the 'PTA LDB' (secretary of Agriculture) series, proved indispensable for the historical chapter. Material was also drawn from the South African Public library and Cape Nature archives in Cape Town. Jan van der Walt's wide-ranging collection of notes, minutes and annual reports of his time with the South African Game Ranching Organisation (SAGRO, from 1980-1997) and Professor John Skinner's personal archive on game utilization proved valuable. Through a PAIA-request (The Promotion of Access to Information Act, Act No. 2 of 2000) the Department of Water and Environmental Affairs provided access to the Wildlife Forum's minutes and reports (2005-2011), while Wildlife Ranching South Africa helped me access some of their archives (2005-2011) containing their quarterly magazine, letters, and

commissioned papers. Other relevant papers were found at the Cory Library and Albany Museum in Grahamstown. Major sources for this dissertation were printed government papers, reports, and commissions. Most endorsed bills, laws and regulations are accessible through the Government's website, www.gov.co.za, or the parliamentary monitoring group at <http://www.pmg.org.za>. Older legislation was found through the University of Pretoria's O.R. Tambo Law Faculty Library. Many white papers, norms and standards, drafts and deliberated legislation were obtained from respondents at the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Water and Environmental Affairs.

Magazines and newspapers serve as additional resources. The *Farmer's Weekly*, *Landbou, Game and Hunt*, *SA Hunter* and their digital archives provided a useful source to monitor key narratives. Furthermore, industry magazines such as ECGMA's *Pelea News*, the WRSA quarterly magazine and *African Indaba* helped define stakeholders as well as their positions in regard to each other.

These sheep, placid creatures that used to require so little food, have now apparently developed a raging appetite and have turned into man-eaters. Fields, houses, towns, everything goes down their throats. To put it more plainly, in those parts of the kingdom where the finest and most expensive wool is produced, the nobles and gentlemen, not to mention several saintly abbots, have grown dissatisfied with the income that their predecessors got out of their estates. They're no longer content to lead lazy lives, which do no good to society - they must actively do it harm, by enclosing all the land they can for pasture, and leaving none for cultivation. They're even tearing down houses and demolishing whole towns - except, of course, for the churches, which they preserve for use as sheepfolds. As though they didn't waste enough of your soil already on their coverts and game-preserves, these kind souls have started destroying all traces of human habitation, and turning every scrap of farmland into a wilderness.

Raphaël Hythlodæus, the fictional traveller of Thomas More's Utopia, 1516

Chapter II Organizing Wild Property

When I first read Achebe's 'Things fall apart' I was struck by its simplicity of structure (Achebe, 1958). The book manages to capture its whole storyline in three words, its title. Firstly Achebe presents a given context by describing daily 'things', then he introduces a set of characters who make things shift and 'fall', and this falling finally comes to a halt in the third section, when all is 'apart'. This chapter does not have Achebe's wit or charm, but it is theoretically structured by three concepts that are closely related and which are captured in its title: 'organizing wild property'. The introduction serves to explain why the three concepts are placed side by side in the first case. Let me start with the odd-term out, the wild.

The wild is conventionally understood to be that which is beyond the scope of human control (cf. Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 2005). Something wild is unorganized. It is not property. It is self-dependent, uncultivated, disorderly and boundless. It is to be feared, revered, treasured and conserved. In the 21st Century 'the wild' is evermore valued by humans, and evermore embraced as well: ecologists, conservationists, landowners, and tourists have all developed notions of the wild and, by means of organized agreements, are reshaping the biophysical world to apply them. These agreements mostly occur in legal spheres and increasingly have a rights-based fixation (Lewis, 2009; Lueck, 1995), hereby habitually convoluting the concepts 'nature' or 'wild', and 'property'. The increasing legalization of nature, in which things that are classified as 'wild' can be ever more owned and traded, marks what I call a shift to 'wild property'. The shift is twofold: firstly 'wild' entities are increasingly organized to be property. Secondly, existing property is increasingly organized to be 'wild'. That is to say, more and more wild entities are sucked into property regimes, while landowners are increasingly '(re)wilding' their pastures and animals. On the one hand private landowners are introducing non-domesticated species and creating wilderness sceneries, and on the other hand these species are (re)classified in terms of policy arrangements to facilitate private utility and property rights.

Both projects depend on a certain mouldability of nature (Onneweer, 2009). Wildness is partly biophysical, but we ought to see wildness as partly 'imagined' and produced as well. William Cronon asserts this by stating that wilderness 'is quite profoundly a human creation – indeed the creation of very particular human cultures at very particular moments in human history' (Cronon, 1995, p. 126). In the imagination and creation of the wild lies the paradox of wild property: whereas humans are constantly altering the wild, abolishing it, and even producing it, wild places are simultaneously 'conceived in their ideal form as spaces for the

rest of time; places imagined to protect some primordial, natural state in perpetuity' (Hawken & Granoff, 2010). While human imagination and organization are vital ingredients of newly produced natures, this is hastily forgotten and exchanged for notions of the primordial inhuman wild.

Ideas about wild property and produced nature are gaining critical scholarly attention. Authors are studying the place of wild animals (Cousins, Sadler, & Evans, 2010; Garland, 2008; Neves, 2010), wilderness (Brockington & Schmidt-Soltau, 2004; Haywood, 2007; Neumann, 1998; Wolmer, 2007), wetlands (Robertson, 2007), genes (Prudham, 2007), water (Bakker, 2007), and other natural entities in society. Commonly, this surge of literature investigates the advancement of 'market environmentalism' by questioning whether the current hegemonic 'free market' rationale provides the best tools to engage with non-human nature (Bakker, 2005; Büscher, 2013; Castree, 2010; Heynen, Prudham, McCarthy, & Robbins, 2007; Peluso & Lund, 2011). This critical body of literature adds a social dimension to this topic by looking beyond financial rationales into the socio-economic consequences of changing environmental ownership relations. Most authors place the recent shift to market-environmentalism within broader political contexts of neoliberalism, a political project which globally, and certainly in South Africa, has become an authoritative governmental disposition (Bassett, 2008a; Bond, 2000, 2009; Habib, 2008). Neoliberalism seeks, according to the late Foucault, 'to extend the rationality of the market, the schemes of analysis it proposes and the decision-making criteria it suggests, to areas that are not exclusively or not primarily economic' (Foucault, 2010, p. 206). The deployment of markets is thus brought forward as the solution to challenges in areas that are not typically economic, such as the family, justice, health, and also the environment (Bakker, 2007, p. 431). The neoliberal agenda is growth-oriented, 'it is a process of commodity production, distribution, sale, servicing and consumption whose central goal is to realise more wealth (notably, in the form of money capital) than was required to make, move, maintain, sell and dispose of commodities in the first place' (Castree, 2007b, p. 1736). Effects of neoliberal shifts are intricate new forms of social dynamics in various domains, of which two stand out specifically concerning nature.

Firstly, human relationships change there were biophysical entities are being 'neoliberalized'. Access to environmental resources and land changes as nature becomes owned, exploited and produced, dividing not only the environment but also local human dynamics. New jobs are created, new knowledge systems are implemented and new boundaries - which lead to new inclusions and exclusions - are erected as the place of humans 'in nature' and in relation to each other is reconsidered.

Secondly, neoliberal nature brings about new relationships between the state and society, particularly between the state and the private sector. Human relationships change at the intersection of these spheres as novel visions on nature are debated and institutionalized: in government meetings, stakeholder platforms and through legal standings (MacDonald, 2010b). To facilitate the growth of capital, boundaries need to be realized to discriminate natural entities and convert them into products. This process of *environmental individuation* (Castree, 2003, p. 280) is key to both the legal as the material domain and is effected through physical boundaries such as fences, but also negotiated and enforced by means of official definitions, classifications and laws. The organization and performance of material and official boundaries, I will argue below, is characterized by imprecision and can be disruptive to both environmental and social dynamics.

This brings us to the second trinity that runs through this chapter and thesis. I will argue that the act of organizing wild property happens through a process of boundary creation of which I distinguish three types (see figure 2.1). For a great deal boundaries are material: humans create distinction by means of fences, walls or armed patrols. These materials however are rooted in official boundaries by means of politico-legal agreements that are backed by state power. Thirdly, and in a sense most fundamentally, these boundaries, however natural they may seem, are imagined boundaries which are socially constructed. Let us keep these three boundaries in mind as I elaborate on the chapter's title.

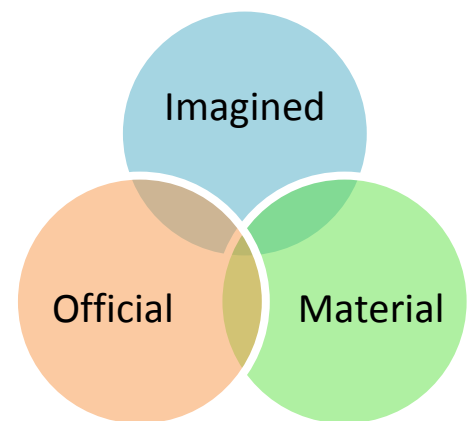


Figure 2.1: Boundaries of the Wild

Like in Achebe's 'Things fall apart', the title of the chapter gives away the structure: I will start with the first word – organizing - to describe how contemporary nature can be seen as a result of negotiations between various stakeholders who act in an organizational field. Secondly I shall focus on the subject of these negotiations – the wild – in an attempt to address the question what wild things are today. Finally I will deal with outcome of these discussions on the wild, namely property or control over the wild, and will place this discussion in a political context of neoliberalization.

Organizing

To understand and study the current production of nature and its social consequences, it is fruitful to see it as an organized political project (cf. MacDonald, 2010b). That is, enactments of nature depend on individual initiatives that involve material, capital, and technology, but also depend ‘on the politico-legal frameworks through which this control is exercised’ (Garland, 2008, p. 61). The privatization of nature does not happen naturally ‘as is often implied by “free market” proponents’ (Mansfield, 2007, pp. 3–4), it is actively organized and re-organised over time by governments and stakeholders in a range of meetings. For the Wild to become commercialized it has to be officially constructed as ‘a concept, a category, an idea, a set of conventionalized metaphors, and a trope for differentiation’ (Delaney, 2001, p. 490). Utopian ideas of nature must be shifted from parsimonious description to legitimate prescriptions ‘of what ought to be’ (Carrier & Miller, 1998, p. 2). This section examines how this political process takes shape by asking how the Wild is ring-fenced by means of official definitions, how dissenting visions compete, and how this discursive competition is set up within ‘organizational fields’. Let me start with the latter.

‘Nothing has been discovered which acts in entire isolation’, Dewey writes. ‘The action of everything is along with the action of other things. The ‘along with’ is of such a kind that the behaviour of each is modified by its connection with others’ (Dewey in Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008). Organizational theory has come to embrace this belief in the last two decades (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010) and, projecting it on its foremost object of study, suggests that organizations are no exception: they do not operate in isolation. To attain grip on any organization’s behaviour one has thus to study the ‘along with’, the actions of other things in tandem with the studied object. The concept of ‘organizational field’ has been devised to facilitate in such inquest and is most notably defined as those ‘organizations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognized area of institutional life’, whether they are suppliers, consumers, regulators or members of civil society (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 148). Broadly defined a field creates relational and discursive space in which field participants take structured positions (Bourdieu, 1993; Wooten & Hoffman, 2007).

The wideness of this definition is particularly useful here; it stretches beyond the definition of an ‘organizational network’ by including organizations that are in the same field but do not interact directly, and it stretches beyond the definition of ‘an industry’ by including all those organizations that are significant to institutional change. I make a distinction here between the ‘actors’ of the game, who are the social structures that embody agency, and the

‘institutions’ of the game, which can be defined as ‘humanly devised constraints that regulate human behaviour’ (High, Pelling, & Nemes, 2005; North, 2005, pp. 3–10). Organizational fields are in this view understood to be structured by institutions or by what Scott has called ‘institutional logic’ – the organizing principles and performative guidelines for both individuals and collectives (Oliver & Montgomery, 2008, p. 1147; W. R. Scott, 2000, p. 170). This institutional logic is produced and reproduced by field participants, thereby co-evolving constantly at the hands of those who are involved. Institutions that administer the field can be both formal as well as informal; they consist of rules that are taken-for-granted and unspoken, as well as official rules to which ‘organizations must conform if they are to avoid penalties for noncompliance’ (Hardy & Maguire, 2010, p. 1367; Hoffman, 1999). Both the institutions and the organisational actors in a field may change over time. They are part of a ‘complex and unstable landscape’ in which organizations continuously have to make sense of, and act upon new events (Laws & Hajer, 2006, p. 410).

Traditionally, theorists have staged organisational fields around products, markets, industries or technologies. I will follow a shift in organisational sciences which says that a field is also ordered by an issue, its ‘driving affair’ (Anand & Jones, 2008; Hoffman, 1999). The ‘wildlife governance field’ is such an issue-based field. It does not revolve around particular actors and neither does it revolve around specific artefacts, technologies or products. The field and its institutional logic are determined by an issue, which can broadly be defined as the establishment of control over wild animals and suitable land. In this ‘wildlife governance field’ organized actors interact directly or indirectly to determine who may organize, manage, or own wild animals in South Africa and under what conditions.

To understand how this issue is debated within its organizational field it is important to obtain a theoretical grip on how a field emerges and is configured. Anand and Jones highlight two different approaches to understanding field configurations (Anand & Jones, 2008). To begin with there is DiMaggio and Powell’s approach which suggests a form of system rationality in which actors collectively engage in intensified interaction and ‘a mutual awareness among participants in a set of organizations that they are involved in a common enterprise’ is eventually developed (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 148). Alternatively, Bourdieu sees the scarcity of resources as an organizing principle for fields. Defining resources in a broad-spectrum manner, he believes that actors establish themselves in relationship to others competitors through constant conflict (Anand & Jones, 2008, p. 1037). They do so to gain more resources in the form of dominance within political arenas, and to accordingly gain more access to specific resources outside the arena. Although external factors can lead to the

redistribution of resources, Bourdieu above all sees the structuring of a field to be created by the configuration of power relations between different actors (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008, p. 11). This second approach is in line with institutional developmental frameworks, which show that institutions are socially embedded and involve issues of power, authority and contestation (Gore, 1993; Leach et al., 1999). This study follows this line of reasoning and examines the discursive interactions and the partly converging, partly conflicting perspectives within the field of wildlife governance. It does so by studying the policy narratives of stakeholders who act in so-called field-configuring events within the wildlife governance field, whether it is in historical policy meetings (Chapter III), on farms and in the media (Chapter IV&V), or in Pretoria's policy platforms such as the Wildlife Forum (Chapter VI&VII).

Field-configuring events as discursive spaces

What is generally accepted about discursive competition is that to gain triumph and bring about institutional change 'a given narrative must displace competing narratives with other versions of events or alternative visions of the future' (Hajer, 1995; Jacobs, Kemeny, & Manzi, 2003). Roe writes that in political settings evidence is often conflicting, contradictory, or sparse, and that simply criticizing an existing narrative by appealing to empirical evidence does not suffice. What is needed to cause institutional change is a counter-narrative with rival hypotheses and plausible policy options for the future (Roe, 1994; Tremblay, 2010). To replace dominant narratives actors attempt to legitimize their positions by continuously searching for discourse coalitions, which are built and broken as events unfold. Hajer shows that such coalitions are not necessarily based on shared interests and goals (Hajer, 1996, p 247). Organisational actors may draw on different narratives in different discursive spaces and therefore move between discourse coalitions. As Hajer explains, 'environmental politics becomes an argumentative struggle in which actors not only try and make others see the problem according to their views but also seek to position other actors in a specific way' (Hajer 1995). This may not only be the case for 'other actors', but can also apply within organizations. For representatives of government, industry or environmentalism, narratives ought to be evocative for their constituencies whilst being consociative to their adversaries as well. This may lead to constant 'text translation' in which the performance of narratives depends not only on the producer, but also on the (targeted) consumer, and the space in which performances take place. To analyze institutional change in political discursive spaces, it is thus significant to understand which narratives are presented by whom, but also what roles both producers, distributors and

consumers of text take. As Hardy and Maguire pose, it is necessary to ask who may produce text, which type of text this is, how and when texts are distributed, and who is allowed to access, act and react to them (Hardy & Maguire, 2010).

The process involving production, distribution, consumption, translation and contestation of narratives occurs in discursive spaces (Hajer, 1995). These are physical or virtual spaces in which actors discuss, debate and dispute ‘issues they perceive to be of consequence to them and their group’ (Hauser, 1999, p. 64). A discursive space can be defined as ‘a site of contestation in which competing interest groups seek to impose their definitions of what the main [problems] are and how they should be addressed’ (Jacobs et al., 2003, p. 442). Each organizational field contains such particular sites, events that provide discursive spaces and are pivotal in their formation and transformation. Lampel and Meyer delineate these as ‘field-configuring events’ (FCEs); temporary social organizations in which persons from diverse professional, organizational, and geographical backgrounds assemble on a one time basis or periodically to generate institutional change (Lampel & Meyer, 2008, p. 1126). FCEs provide structured as well as unstructured opportunities for face-to-face social interaction in which information is exchanged and dispositions on common issues are presented. They are:

...arenas in which networks are constructed, business cards are exchanged, reputations are advanced, deals are struck, news is shared, accomplishments are recognized, standards are set, and dominant designs are selected. FCEs can enhance, reorient, or even undermine existing technologies, industries, or markets; or alternately, they can become crucibles from which new technologies, industries, and markets emerge. (ibid.)

Following Weick’s ideas about the production of meaning, Oliver and Montgomery speak of these events as facilitators for ‘shared sense-making’ (Oliver & Montgomery, 2008, p. 1149). They give actors the opportunity to launch their narratives on, in my case, wildlife governance, but are also opportunities to learn about other actors’ positions. In FCEs actors can gain recognition, construct mutual understandings, but also take up alternative, at times conflicting relational positions (Oliver & Montgomery, 2008, p. 1149). By means of negotiations, conflicts, or mutual understanding, FCEs can thus instigate organizational as well as institutional change. Lampel and Meyer note that the organisation of FCEs may be for this very reason, to facilitate organisational change, so that institutional entrepreneurs can advance their own positions, create an interactive field, or mimic more established fields (Lampel & Meyer, 2008, p. 1028).

FCEs do not consist of merely one ‘key discursive space’; they are characterized by multiple spaces which are constructed around each other. Official forums are usually preceded and ensued by meetings between organizations and their constituents as well as between coalitions of various representatives. They also co-constitute informal discursive spaces that can equally be foundational for new mutual understandings and narrative construction. Important coalitions-forming or decision-making may occur over lunch, in the supermarket, or even in the bathroom. FCEs should thereby not be regarded as single events, but as chains of interlinked moments in which classification narratives are produced, distributed, consumed, and acted upon.

Notably, FCE participants communicate and compete with organisational actors outside the event. At a race for instance, runners compete with each other to set the club record or the event record, but simultaneously compete with runners and records that are physically absent (See Rao, 1994 for an example on automobile races). A runner may be triumphant in one particular event, but this does not necessarily mean that he has set the track, club, or world record. His success may well alter the field and even do so significantly, but the actor is still in competition with those who are absent because they are unable to come, are uninvited, uninterested, or have left the organisational field (having changed activities or perhaps because of death). Political forums, Garud shows, are rather different than sporting events though in the sense that they have not adopted clear-cut formal institutions to establish what constitutes victory (Garud, 2008, p. 1081). In sporting events there are guidelines that determine which person may compete in which event, how they should perform during the competition (and leading up to it), what constitutes the race, and how new standards are set.

In political forums it is much more ambivalent how power configurations may be demonstrated, performed or measured. Garud speaks in such case of ‘meta-races’ in which ‘criteria for victory are being negotiated even as the tournament is unfolding, thereby generating ambiguity endogenously’ (ibid.). Hence, political FCEs provide venues to compete and to set new standards throughout the field even though not all participants may agree on new standards and even though it is unclear how these new standards will affect the larger organizational field. Therefore, it is important to understand the narratives of actors in an FCE in relation to the narratives in the broader organizational field. Silenced and translated counter-narratives may especially reveal information about dominant actors, hegemonic discourse, and processes that legitimize and define ‘the wild’.

Wild

What do we mean then when we talk about ‘the wild’? In this paragraph I attempt to define the concept ‘wild’ by looking at classical definitions, but also by continuing the social constructive thread of thinking that sculpted the previous paragraph. The wild, in the context of this research, is most commonly understood as a subclassification of the ambiguous concept ‘nature’, which distinguishes wild and non-wild beings. Hull reminds us that even if nature has one and only one unique structure, it seems that ‘in our attempts to discover that structure, we keep changing our minds’ (Hull in Douglas & Hull, 1992, p. 42). In search of that one right structure we continuously fabricate new concepts and boundaries to separate nature from ourselves and from itself. An elegant example that demonstrates this is found in Jorge Luis Borges story ‘The analytical language of John Wilkins’ (Borges, Reid, & Monegal, 1981). The Argentinean poet and novelist writes about a ‘certain Chinese encyclopaedia’ he stumbled upon which has a curious animal taxonomy:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| ▪ belonging to the Emperor | ▪ included in the present classification |
| ▪ embalmed | ▪ frenzied |
| ▪ tame | ▪ innumerable |
| ▪ sucking pigs | ▪ drawn with a very fine camelhair brush |
| ▪ sirens | ▪ et cetera |
| ▪ fabulous | ▪ having just broken the water pitcher |
| ▪ stray dogs | ▪ that from a long way off look like flies |

To a contemporary mind this system of classification might seem unappealing, illogical, absurd even. The charm of this outlandish categorization, Foucault demonstrates, lies in the idea that it reveals ‘the limitation of our own [thought system], the stark impossibility of thinking *that*’ (Foucault, 1970a, p. xv italics in original). It shows us just how entrenched our system of categories is. Even when challenged by unfamiliar classifications, we think within our own categories and seem to be barred of thinking about the categories that shape our thinking. By including seemingly unnecessary and redundant elements, the Chinese Encyclopaedia furthermore challenges our very conception of category and order. How can incongruous and disorderly things be linked to each other? Should they not be re-arranged? What is the coherence ‘which, as is immediately apparent, is neither determined by an *a priori* and necessary concatenation, nor imposed on us by immediately perceptible contents?’ (Foucault, 1970a, p. xx). However, the Chinese example illustrates one point very well: categories are

ideas and order is an idea. The boundaries we construct between concepts are ideas that can be challenged or accepted. Whiteness is thus an idea. Defining mammals as creatures that suckle their young is an idea. And so are definitions of wildness.

The wild can refer to behaviour, species, land, in some cases even to expressions of humanness. It is one of the critical boundaries we impose on nature: natural entities are defined in relation to humans as wild or domesticated. However, there are two opposed understandings of the word wild, which I will further explore in this section: the 'wild' as something that is primordial and natural, and the 'wild' as something that is mouldable and plastic. In its classical definition 'the wild' is understood to be a fundamental distinction that separates humans from other biophysical matter. The wild is defined as intrinsically inhuman; humans that are affected by it are drawn closer to a primeval state, while matter that is affected by humans is understood to lose its wildness. Wildness here can be recognized as an antithesis to cultivation, domestication, or even rationality and it is commonly placed at the end of a continuum that describes the difference between humans and other species (Jarman & Wilkinson, 1972). This first conception of the 'wild' cannot exist without the 'domestic'; which is generally made up of three different practices, the taming, breeding and confining of nature (Bökönyi, 1989; Clutton-Brock, 1992; Hesse, 1984; Ingold, 1980, p. 82). Bökönyi's classic definition holds all three elements and defines domestication as 'the capture and taming by man of animals of a species with particular behavioural characteristics, their removal from their natural living area and breeding community, and their maintenance under controlled breeding conditions for profit (Bökönyi, 1989, p. 219)'.¹⁴ A more socially engaged definition comes from Ducos who holds that 'domestication can be said to exist when living animals are integrated as objects into the socioeconomic organization of the human group, in the sense that, while living, those animals are objects for ownership, inheritance, exchange, trade, etc...' (Ducos 1978: 54 in Russell, 2002). The socioeconomic aspects of domestication are particularly relevant for our inquiry and allude to the questions of ownership that are commonly entangled in the dichotomy. While domesticated nature is conceived to be private property, wild nature is regarded to belong to nobody and anybody as common property. Wilderness is managed strictly by the state, while the domestic is attended to by private owners. Wilderness is to be protected, while the domestic is to be improved.¹⁵ Accordingly, the two categories are rigidly separated by law,

¹⁴ Other authors single out one or two of these processes while disregarding or being sceptical of the third process. Russell for example writes that taming is a prerequisite for domestication, while Ingold argues that in some forms of ranching taming is not significant (Russell, 2002, p. 289).

¹⁵ See for example the respective preambles of the Animal Improvement Act and the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, No. 10 of 2004.

administration and institutions. In the sphere of this strict dichotomy, domestication is understood as a process that changes one of nature's essential characteristics: the fact that it is wild. Animals, plants, and other natural entities lose their wildness after humans confine, subdue or modify their lives. Some authors have stressed that this practice of conditioning should be understood as a 'two-way process' (Lien & Law, 2011) which severely impacts human-nature relations as well as human-human relations (Cassidy & Mullin, 2007; Haraway, 2007). This is also what Engels described, writing that, 'the domestication of animals... developed a hitherto unsuspected source of wealth and created entirely new social relations' (Engels, 1942, p. 119). That is, humans enabled new kind of capital flows by means of domestication and also made new kinds of human differentiation and inequality possible (Russell 2002: 293; Ingold 2000).¹⁶

But what if, as this thesis holds, natural entities are also imagined, constructed and produced to be wild? Nature and natural entities, as in the case of game reserves in South Africa, can also be produced by humans to fit the human definition of wild. Somewhat paradoxically this other wild, as Cronon proposes, should be understood as a social construction of the natural world that is 'the reflection of our own unexamined longings and desires' (1995, p. 69-70). To distinguish the two concepts I shall call this type of nature 'wild property' or 'produced nature' by which I refer to nature as a product of our own mind's eye, reified by our organization and production skills, and imagined to be something separated from humanness. The crevasse between these two concepts is great: the one states that the wild is all that humans and their influence is not, while the other defines the wild as a most human creation. The seeming resemblance of entities that can be boxed by these two definitions however, is convenient for those who wish to do business with the wild. It provides a situation in which human productions can be labelled, marketed, transferred and sold as 'wild' things. This can be done because wild property comes with a particularly strong form of alienation and can thereby bridge the 'produced nature paradox'. That is, new nature is far less apparent as a commodity than conventional products like silver rings, cell phones, or cars. New wilderness presents a more concealed commodity because it is made to represent exactly that what a commodity is not; something untouched and uncontrolled by humans. Even if new nature is tamed, bred and provided for, it is recognized by consumers as a thing that can grow, sustain

¹⁶ Rebecca Cassidy shows that as of late, fascinating studies have begun to stress the mutuality of human-animal relations by looking at concepts such as reciprocity and cooperation (Cassidy 2007:2). Some authors, such as Steven Budiansky, have gone further even by attributing the domestication of humans to animals (Budiansky, 1992).

and reproduce itself. The status of a tiger that is hand-reared and fed on a daily basis is ambivalent for the tourist who spots the animal while on safari in a setting that may or could be its natural habitat. The production process, in which workers, local inhabitants and the environment are often carefully staged, is easily obscutable. Because one does not recognize a tiger as a commodity that is co-arranged to increase value on one's land, one is not inclined to ask questions about the human relations that are involved in its production process. And, new natures are not completely a product of the imagination of course. Even those tigers which are hand reared, fed, bred and morphologically altered to suit man's wishes are erratic, have agency, and can to a degree sustain themselves. In the context of landscapes, Onneweer writes that such new natures contain 'an intrinsic forgetfulness. Obviously there are large machines, but once they have gone nothing is left to remind of the previous landscape' (2009: 57). By means of this 'intrinsic forgetfulness', it is quickly forgotten not only that humans and their imagination were part of the production process, but even that this is possible: as new nature establishes itself it becomes apparent as 'old nature' which is primordial, authentic and inhuman. This nature is understood to be intrinsically void of (in)justice, and offences that are caused by the production of it (through physical danger, economic or geographical displacement) are easily brushed aside because nature is both part and outcome of the process. Nature cannot be held accountable or be blamed.

Hawken and Granoff (2010) show how such enactment of nature as products resonates with what Foucault has called 'heterotopias' (Foucault & Miskowiec, 1986, p. 23). As an alternative of utopias, places that are imagined but have no actual place, heterotopias are places that are imagined and yet also have a real place (ibid: 24). Produced natures can be understood as heterotopias – 'as places formed in a moment of time and yet conceived in their ideal form as spaces for the rest of time; places imagined to protect some primordial, natural state in perpetuity; both closed and open' (Hawken & Granoff, 2010). Important for Foucault is that these heterotopias are created in response to other spaces: the production of the wild could be thought of as a manifestation which opposes the non-wild. Admirers of the wild often lead urban, industrious lives and thereby long for places that offer the opposite. Human imagination is according to this concept infused into existing landscapes and also into other humans and animals, all of which have complex dynamics and histories (ibid: 125). Wild biomass is utilized as a living canvas to paint human ideas on: in following chapters we shall see for instance that wildlife is increasingly bred to have horns the size hunters desire, to mature meat the taste diners prefer, to calve at rates that breeders aspire, and live the way international conservation treaties define.

The value of the wild is thus high, and it is a particularly attractive product if we imagine the world to be what Marris has called the 'post wild world', a world in which 'homo sapiens sapiens' has come to influence the life of each animal on the globe (Marris, 2011). In the post-wild world, there is no remaining classical wilderness as all has been intoxicated and blemished somehow by humans. The conception of wilderness and the experience thereof has become entangled with nostalgia and exclusivity. The predicate 'wild' has thereby been converted to a business opportunity and a possible comparative advantage for those who wish to profit from this scarce and highly sought-after good. Whether we speak of salmon (Lien & Law, 2011), mushrooms, lions, or landscapes (Cronon, 1996), the predicate 'wild' adds a great extent of value to natural entities.

In a circuitous manner, one could also apply such reasoning to humans. Rural communities may find themselves to be commoditized 'as their culture becomes part of the selling point for people-centred conservation initiatives or ecotourism marketing' (West et al., 2006, p. 257). Humans and their practices are thereby also placed on 'a scale of authenticity' (West et al., 2004) and evoked as either 'good natives' who are traditional, nature conserving and close to the wild, or 'bad natives' who are modern, domesticating and destructive to nature (Neumann, 1997, p. 567). Even when humans are incorporated into new natures however, they are seldom understood to be fully congruent with ideals of nature, especially because they are capable of converting to 'bad natives' who disrupt the imagined wild (ibid.). The result is that many campaigns, either in practice and discourse, have been waged against non-wild inhabitants of natures and new natures. Only 'wild' animals are understood to be authentic inhabitants and not only human but also unauthentic animals are therein branded as non-natural natives (i.e. domesticated, threatening, alien or invasive species).

Environmental managers habitually attempt to plan their landscapes from a non-anthropocentric focus in which wild animals are understood to be 'good to think with' (Levi-Strauss, 1963; Onneweer, 2009, p. 49). In attempts to understand and respect the behaviour and wildness of nature, managers award animals with large tracts of land with features that in their eyes accommodate or attract desired species. This generally makes the land less hospitable or at times inhospitable for human residency. However, it is important to recognize that wild land never excludes all humans. Humans such as scientist, land manager or tourist are catered for, once, as is poetically explicated in the US Wilderness Act, they do not remain:

A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and community of life are

untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain (Wilderness Act of 1964, Pub.L. 88-577).

This imagined conception of the wild is explicitly made known to visitors, it does not speak for itself. Onneweer (2009) and Ronayne (Ronayne, 2001, p. 149) write that the wild is ‘made legible’ and introduced to visitors on site. Human borders such as fences, entry and exit gates, guards, or barbed wire, distinguish the land from that which surrounds it. Information signs, warning symbols (see picture), websites, brochures and visitor centres make one ‘an informed visitor’ (Onneweer 2009). Certain humans and certain practices are thus welcome in the wild: we should thus not ask ‘whether people’ but rather which people have access to the wild ‘when, how, and why?’ (Hawken & Granoff, 2010, p. 127).



Figure 2.2: Making boundaries legible (photo by author)

In sum, wild property shares meaning, distinctions and practices with classical definitions of the wild and especially the domesticated. It is a human manifestation, which manages biophysical entities by confining them (either physically or legally) and applies artificial selection, which affects life cycles to gain profits. The wild is performed on human-managed (often former agricultural) land and its management takes inspiration from a range of

domestication practices (particular forms of taming, breeding and enclosing). Just like domestication, the production of new natures creates a vast source of wealth that comes with entirely new social relations and, as I will argue below, new social ruptures and forms of injustice. Just like domestication it is an unruly and ongoing process (Cassidy & Mullin, 2007) and just like domestication it may be better described in a spectrum, rather than a dichotomy, that sees wild entities as a particular ‘human-nature relationship’ among many (Russell, 2002).

Property

Regardless of the definition one chooses for nature, the speed and extent at which material and legal boundaries are being imposed on it, is unprecedented. In the last few decades the private sector has emerged as a principal producer of nature, often stimulated by government incentives to foster conservation and development (MacDonald, 2010a, p. 257). This can be seen as a reflection of global economic trends, more precisely as a manifestation of contemporary ‘neoliberal approaches’ to the environment.

Although the term ‘neoliberal’ remains a treacherous container concept in the sense that it is swamped by many definitions (Campbell & Pedersen, 2001; Harvey, 2005; Mudge, 2008), the concept ‘neoliberal nature’ finds more clear and recent origins in literature. The use of the term was much replicated after a special issue of *Geoforum* appeared in 2004 by the name ‘Neoliberal nature and the nature of neoliberalism’, in which it was established that ‘little scholarship has explicitly theorized connections between neoliberalism and the environment’ (McCarthy & Prudham, 2004, p. 275). In line with Marx and Polanyi’s understanding of capitalism as a specific historically, geographically and context-dependent state of affairs, involved scholars mark neoliberalism as one particular manifestation of capitalism that is prevalent today and has more than ever brought out capital’s social and environmental contradictions (Castree, 2007a; Heynen et al., 2007). Now, as Noel Castree reviewed and summarized (c.f. Castree, 2007b, 2010, 2013), a significant body of theoretically informed empirical research has emerged and broadened out the debate by defining neoliberalism as a political as well ‘as an environmental project, and that it is necessarily so’ (McCarthy & Prudham, 2004, p. 277). That is, if neoliberalism is recognized as a resumption and intensification of classical liberalism it must also cope with classic liberal’s central staging of social relations in and with nature. Especially predominant in this belief-system are interpretations and writings of Locke on human’s place in nature and property relations among humans.

In his ‘Two Treatises of Government’ the seventeenth century philosopher famously stated that to ‘exclude the common right of other men is a necessary liberty for the rightful owner of property’ (Locke, 1988). In line with this logic, once one acquires property rights, which are recognized by government, no other may interfere with these holdings. As liberal thinkers have repeated many times afterwards, these absolute property rights give one the right to use, deteriorate, destroy or alienate property and to exclude others (Honoré, 1961; Sidgwick, 2012). Furthermore, Locke infused his theory on property with human labour, staging private property as both the outcome of labour as well as the incentive for labour, effective social organization and wealth (Mansfield, 2007, p. 5). The privatization of nature was thereby theoretically launched as the central stage for the accumulation of wealth by means of labour-infused commodity markets.

A fundamental critique on this idea comes from Polanyi who argues that privatization of land, labour and nature leads to the creation of ‘fictitious commodities’ (Polanyi, 1944, pp. 68–76). The conjunction of the market and environment make it seem as though natural entities are commodities which can be owned and traded, but Polanyi emphasizes that these commodities are not originally produced by humans for this purpose.

Of course, they were not actually commodities, since they were either not produced at all (like land) or, if so, not for sale (like labour). Yet no more thoroughly effective fiction was ever devised. Because labor and land were freely bought and sold, the mechanism of the market was made to apply to them. There was now a supply of labor and demand for it; there was a supply of land and demand for it. Accordingly, there was a market price for the use of labor power, called wages, and a market price for the use of land, called rent. Labor and land were provided with markets of their own, similar to those of the proper commodities produced with their help. ... [Yet] labor is only another name for man, and land for nature’ (Polanyi, 1944, p. 10).

More recently, Harvey chipped in from a social constructivist perspective by highlighting that natural resources are not *naturally* ownable resources. They become resources through historically and geographically specific imagination and social appraisals (Harvey, 1974, p. 272). In Holland today one cannot point at a seagull that flies by and pronounce it to be: ‘sold!’ It is not common to trade a hog for a meal at the local diner, or to use an ant colony as a financial asset to secure a bank loan. Yet, as many new commercial associations with nature are becoming legally possible it is not unthinkable that hogs, seagulls or ant colonies will be gradually absorbed into financial systems. Many (other) animals and landscapes that bear the

predicate 'wild' are now socially appraised as assets that can be owned, traded, and used as financial resources.

Material and Official Boundary making

Because nature, according to the dominant market environmentalism, is seen as part of a country's 'capital' that should be exploited in a rational capitalist way (West et al., 2004, p. 483), the creation of boundaries that discriminate natural entities and convert them to products is key. This involves a process of *environmental individuation*: by means of socio-technical advancements and legal framing natural 'noun-chunks of reality' are 'cut' from the dynamic complexity of the world and are enacted as individual commodities (Castree, 2003, p. 280). These 'cuts' are effected through legal and material boundaries: by means of fences, fire arms, wildlife policies and other social considerations. The process of environmental individuation is, as explored in this dissertation, often messy and imprecise. Material individuation targets elements of an intrinsically boundless 'nature' and therefore unavoidably affects the environment. In their inaccuracy, material boundaries do not only individuate desired resources, but also alter, confine or obstruct the advancement of other beings (cf. J. C. Scott, 1998). This equally applies to legal individuation which, in its quest to assign clear-cut, legally enforceable private property rights, aims to 'free up' nature and make it legible (McCarthy & Prudham, 2004; J. C. Scott, 1998). In the process of being reshaped to fit the logic of the market, nature is inevitably classified in a generic manner that erases certain individual specificities. 'Aspects of environments and people that do not fit the categories', West et al write, 'are reduced to irrelevance or even hindrance' (West et al., 2004, p. 491).

Usually the described cuts are not solitary ones, Leys writes. 'We normally have in mind not the once-off sale of a single item, but the conversion of a whole class of goods or services into commodities and a resulting stream of sales' (Leys, 2003, p. 87). Legal enforcers seldom individuate a single seagull or giraffe as an ownable good. Rather, the whole species or class is shifted to a new legal category through which all included individuals can be privatized or commercialised. By altering pixels on a screen, species can be 'made ownable' (cf. "made killable" by their positioning in social hierarchies of dominance, in Haraway, 2007). The status of large tracts of land, complete species but also human access to these natures may be altered by the stroke of a pen (Peluso & Lund, 2011).

The legal tool that is used to 'slice noun-chunks from the complex natural world' (Castree 2003) is thus not a knife, fence or pair of scissors; it is the mechanism of naming. By naming things, the world becomes legible, communicable, and also tradable. In his book 'gay

science', Nietzsche comments on the process of naming and labelling and observes it is such a potent process that it seems to create new things altogether. This causes him the greatest difficulty as 'unspeakably more depends on what things are called than on what they are' (Nietzsche in Hacking, 2007, p. 294). Perhaps Nietzsche provokes and overstates the importance of names by claiming their detachment from empirical counterparts, but he does point at a remarkable quality of classification. That is, the (re)naming of phenomena legitimizes them and invigorates new practices that interrelate directly with the biophysical world. John Law and Marianne Lien, who examine scientific classifications of wild salmon, suggest that classification systems do not simply describe nature, they *perform* and thereby produce nature (Bowker & Star, 2000; Lien & Law, 2011). Biophysical entities are performed by classifications 'in a way that seeks to transcend the specificities of time and space' (Lien & Law, 2011). Techno-scientific taxonomies, but also folk taxonomies and official taxonomies, aim to universalize discourse on specific entities and are performative in the sense that they condition nature-society relations. The ownership, production, sale, trade, donation, and marketing of wild things is dependent on and goes paired with official classifications of the wild which perform politico-legal control over (dealings with) these entities. The tinkering with these classifications is part of what Foucault called 'biopolitics, or the set of mechanisms through which lives have become the object of political strategy' (Foucault, 2010).

Both the official government and scientific discipline strive for systematisation and control over nature, and, even if their classifications frequently entangle and fuse, the degree to which their information systems are 'right' is variable. Science generally aims to expose the fluidity and complexities of the world, and its organisational disunity allows for a great extent of competition, density and diversity of category ideas. Governments and bureaucracies on the other hand call for singular, fair and operational taxonomies that orderly define rules, regulations and legal standings. A particular discrepancy between biological and bureaucratic knowledge systems concerns the management of complexity. Linnaeus for instance created his system to include 300 *genii*, partly, so that it could be remembered by each naturalist (Ereshefsky, 1999). Today, more than 50,000 *genii* are recognized and this sheer number makes it impossible for bureaucrats to distinguish all classifications. Like Linnaean biological taxonomies, official taxonomies are designed to carry a basic level of pragmatism. A state must describe, clarify and take responsibility for its categories, and officials must perform them, so a pragmatic information system to deal with nature is needed. Taking all scientific distinctions into account would overburden such a system and more importantly, most distinctions would not matter to the state. The state may not find any reason to have separate rules for 1200 types

of ants, for the same reason that philosopher Hull jokingly states, ‘when I order a fruit cocktail, I do not want tomatoes mixed in, even if technically speaking tomatoes are fruit’ (Hull in Douglas & Hull, 1992). What does matter to the state are human understandings of interactions with nature and wild things (is the wild a resource, a threat, or something intrinsic that needs to be conserved?) and it constructs *metataxonomic categories*, which transcend ‘the classificatory grid of biological nomenclature’ (Helmreich, 2005, p. 110), to cut its complexity to manageable proportions. States thereby attempt to find compromise between what Rosch calls ‘over-discrimination and over-abstraction’ (Mervis & Rosch, 1981, pp. 77–78). Essentially these metataxonomical categories, such as vermin, protected species, endangered species, domestic animal, do not serve to understand or direct animals. They serve to guide humans in their dealings with nature.

In ‘Seeing like a State’, James Scott talks about the downsides of such ‘state simplifications’. He argues that in its mission to administrate order in society and nature, the state erases illegible and complex local social practices or beliefs and imposes standard names and categories that can be centrally recorded or monitored (J. C. Scott, 1998, p. 4). Lien comments on such simplification and concludes that by means of global industrialisation unique specimens become ‘universal biogenetic artifacts’ that can be counted and traded (Lien, 2007) and thereby lose their uniqueness. Mitchell has called this process in which something is described by only one particular aspect ‘metonymy’ (Mitchell, 2006, p. 54). Oak trees are reduced to one-dimensional timber, sheep become mutton and all entities that are believed to be ‘unnatural’ are labeled ‘alien’ and are made killable (Haraway, 2007). Names and categories that are created by states, Scott believes, do not represent actual social processes in society and are not even intended to do so (J. C. Scott, 1998, p. 3). They represent only that slice of complex reality the state is interested in. An inquiry into the chosen names may therefore not only reveal the simplification, it will also uncover inundated political values and agenda’s. Research on official knowledge systems must thus question what official definitions include and exclude, where boundaries are erected, and from whose perspective they are just. As Delaney states:

It matters where the lines are drawn. It matters which reasons are advanced as justification for drawing the line in one place rather than another. *Law matters*, at least because these metaphysical distinctions are realized—perhaps ‘concretized’ is the better term—on segments of the material world. None of this is meant to imply that law is a privileged site of cultural production, although it may have pretensions of privilege. It is only to say that, if we are interested in learning about the construction of nature as a social process, those practices that

are conventionally identified as ‘the legal’ would be fruitful and revealing places to look (Delaney, 2001, p. 489).

Law is an important cultural site where nature is produced, Delaney purports. An official policy category is thus more than a metaphysical or descriptive distinction: it pencils in underlying definitions, rules and practices and confers a meaning that determines how biophysical matter ought to be enacted. Official taxonomies with their subcategories, Starr states, should be seen as ‘frameworks of incentives’ (1992, pp. 263–267). The boundaries provide ‘a conceptual map of categorical inclusions and exclusions’ (Delaney, 2001, p. 489) which stimulate or deter humans from interacting with particular entities. An official category name may in itself not be an explanation with depth or power, but as it is perceived to be real by an institutional system, it does tie the natural and the social into an information infrastructure.

Nature has both an active and a passive role in this. On the one hand nature is uncompromising and humans must take its inflexible properties into account. Specific species traits, especially those that facilitate or obstruct capital expanse (such as the ability to produce proteins, or to harm others), influence both industries and policy-making processes. On the other hand, ‘all barriers and opportunities are relative: they arise from the articulation of the non human world with available technologies, modes of resource appraisal, and so on’ (Castree 2003). It must not be forgotten that the legal boundaries that concretize metaphysical distinctions are ‘human mental constructs... they are intellectual boundaries we put on the world in order to help us apprehend it and live in an orderly way... nature does not have categories, people do’ (Stone, 1988). Categories of the wild are inevitably built up by *one-way* relationships: humans purport various meanings about nature, an authentic claim is impossible. A Kenyan parliamentarian noted this while addressing wildlife laws in his country:

Mr. Speaker, when the registration of voters was taking place, I did not hear of any animal being asked to go and register as a voter; I heard the campaigners only ask human beings.¹⁷

The legalization of nature has thus got the potential to alter the lives of animals in an autocratic manner. Frequently, Peluso & Lund argue, it also ‘dispossesses commoners or individual claimants without legal titles, and powerful, legitimized, or draconian enforcement turns ordinary people into poachers and squatters’ (Peluso & Lund, 2011, p. 674). Such legal shifting thus entails that both environmental and human entities and their interconnected relations

¹⁷ The Honorable J.M. Kalenga, addressing the National Assembly, 10 December 1982 in Gibson p49.

become fundamentally different through a process of privatization. Differently said, through legal shifting environmental entities are enacted in a fundamentally different manner in and by society. After a natural entity is defined as capitalist property, not only the entity, but also humans are disciplined to become market subjects as they are classified as owners and non-owners (Mansfield, 2007, p. 4). Drawing on legal scholarship Mansfield argues that private property is therefore not so much a thing, but rather a social arrangement that can change over time and is constituted by other people's acknowledgement of it: 'any "freedom" is one that is given by others, and is not inherent in the property itself' (ibid, p.7). The liberties that society attributes to property owners co-constitute its economic system as well as human-human relations. In a neoliberal system these interactions become 'embodied capitalist relations (albeit in myriad specific forms)' (Prudham, 2007, p. 411). But although humans have devised this system in which access to nature, ownership, and labour is determined (Brockington, 2011, p. 367), we frequently fail to remember their social nature and origin. As Weber points out in his analysis of the iron cage of bureaucracy, modern humans are constrained at every juncture from true freedom of action by a set of rules of their own making (Bowker & Star, 2000, p. 320).

What is 'neo' about all this?

The described process of social displacement by privatization and commodification of nature are part of the classical liberalist doctrine. Their manifestations or theorizations are by no means new. Marx summons an example from 1848 for instance, in which a Scottish farmer by the name of Robert Somers wrote to *The Times*. Mr. Somers wrote that local farmers and tenants were not only displaced from the land which they used for their subsistence, but were also barred from hunting deer by means of physical enclosures and legal penalties: 'Now deer are supplanting sheep; and these are once more dispossessing the small tenants, who will necessarily be driven down upon still coarser land and to more grinding penury. Deer-forests and the people cannot co-exist' (Letter from Robert Somers in Marx & Engels, 1961 Chapter 27). The wild-domestic dichotomy was already played out at this time. In his letter Somers reclassifies fenced deer as 'demurely domesticated cattle' that are stripped from their wildness and have become mere objects of an elite industry (Robbins & Luginbuhl, 2007). Some of the earliest enclosures of public property were those for the utilization and production of wildlife and they often went paired with narratives of preservation (Beinart, 2008). Just like in Scotland, African territorial enclosures have for centuries been intended to keep out unwanted animals as well as unwanted humans. Indeed then, there are many continuities between the debates on 'classic' and 'neo' liberal natures (Peluso & Lund, 2011, p. 672). There are also important

divergences however and I will highlight a two-trapped answer to the question what then is ‘neo’ about *neoliberal* enactments of nature.

Firstly, neoliberalism entails a quantitative and qualitative intensification of production through which more nature is being produced than ever before. Not only is the physical quantity of produced nature higher, but the type of boundaries that are imposed on nature are expanded and amplified by means of new socio-technical advances and appraisals (cf. elaborate new property laws and patents, biotechnology, virtual commodification). Secondly, relationships between the private sector and government that were necessary to sustain a classical capitalist system have intensified. Under neoliberalism, the process of deregulating control over common resources to individuals by means of privatization strengthened and evolved to new sorts of public-private partnerships in which the private sector is employed to pursue state goals and vice versa. Contrary to what ‘free-market’ ideology seems to suggest, neoliberal deregulation has thus not necessarily reduced the state’s role. Morgan Robertson has observed that although neoliberal nature is understood to operate outside the formal state by means of free-market instruments and non-governmental flanking mechanisms, in practice it has ‘led to endless numbers of “stakeholder forums”, in which to achieve the outcome and effect of market-led environmental *governance*, we had to avert our eyes from the actual acts of *government* occurring at a table crowded with bureaucrats’ (Robertson, 2007, p. 504). Biodiversity conservation offers a good example. The governance of this established public goal, of which Foucault would state that it is not exclusively or primarily economic, is changing rapidly under neoliberal authority to facilitate new private enclosures and conservation-based enterprises. The neoliberal conservation agenda, Corson sums up:

...has created new symbolic and material spaces for global capital expansion. First, it supplies a critical stamp of environmental stewardship for corporate and political leaders. Second, not only does it carve out new physical territories for capitalist accumulation through both the physical demarcation and enclosure of common lands as protected areas, but also through the growing capitalist enterprise that is forming around the concept of biodiversity conservation (Corson, 2010, p. 579).

New ways to legitimize private land ownership and austerity measures are hereby born. Traditional state ‘routines’ such as the protection of landscapes and management of wild animals are being externalised to private sector partners, while business routines are internalized and implicated by governance structures. Particular evidence of such shifts is the

commencement of ‘organizational units inside conservation organizations dedicated to establishing, fostering, and managing collaborative relationships with private sector interests; social and environmental responsibility programmes established within corporate sectors; and incentive programmes developed at state and supra-state levels to promote the establishment of such relationships’ (MacDonald, 2010a, p. 257). Private operators are thereby endorsed to produce and sell public nature, while conservation bodies secure funding, and government targets swaths of these new natures for public conservation goals. As Corson says, this gives corporations as well as politicians a ‘critical stamp of environmental stewardship’, whilst offsetting governmental costs and generating business opportunities (Corson, 2010, p. 579).

The market-friendly *reregulation* of public-private relationships is, as Büscher states, characterized by consensus building between specific stakeholders (Bücher, 2013). To indicate this, neoliberal relationships and programs are frequently presented as ‘win-win’ solutions that benefit many. The former South African Minister of Environmental Affairs for example avowed that ‘game farming and hunting contribute significantly to conservation, tourism development, job creation and sustainable development in rural areas’ (statement at the Professional Hunters Association Gala Dinner in 2007). State and private sector goals are aligned and relationships are strengthened by means of intensified communication and joint activities. The discursive spaces as well as Field Configuring Events are thus changing in form and tone.

Critical studies show that, despite of win-win discourses, market environmentalism ‘distributes fortune and misfortune at the same time’ (Brockington et al., 2008, p. 73). The new alliances may create harmony between business and governance, but they may also create friction within the alliance and with labour unions, social activists, NGOs and the public (MacDonald 2010; Harvey 2005). This is to be observed in the discursive spaces and field configuring events in which neoliberal nature is produced. Campbell and Pederson for instance argue that the exclusivity of negotiation partners is inherent to the neoliberal programme. This because it strives towards decentralized capital–labour relations which are unencumbered by strong unions and collective bargaining, and favours free-market solutions to economic problems rather than bargaining or indicative planning, and is dedicated to controlling inflation at the expense of full employment (2001:5).

Neoliberalism’s inherent and excluding form of consensus building can be named as one of the reasons that neoliberalism is ‘necessarily’ an environmental project as it has developed the understanding that market environmentalism is no longer an oxymoron (McCarthy & Prudham, 2004). Its encouragement of public-private consensus has flipped both

resource extraction and resource conservation to the same side of the coin. The result is that nature in its most extensive definition has been targeted for production processes. That is, not only the extraction of natural resources, but also the governance, conservation, and construction of new nature are being driven by ideas of capital expansion. Following Marx, authors have branded this as a fundamental paradox of green capitalism and note that the process of commodifying nature to conserve it may, because of capital's tendency to expand, actually accelerate rather than diminish resource degradation (Fletcher, 2010, p. 172). Posed differently, this process is likely to lead to what Marx and Neves have called a widening 'metabolic rift' whereby the dynamic process by which humans and nature 'exchange nutrients that are essential to living processes both in humans and in nature', is ruptured (Neves, 2010, p. 727). Authors are increasingly demonstrating that this rupture also takes place in business approaches to the wild that label themselves as sustainable, non-exploitative and respectful. Because these business models (eco-tourism is a fine example) are primarily arranged to meet economic and only secondarily societal goals, sustainability labels are prone to be misleading (Butt, 2011; Duffy & Moore, 2010; Neves, 2010).

Social Ruptures

Besides environmental ruptures, neoliberal nature also comes with dramatic changes to human relationships there were biophysical entities are being 'neoliberalized'. Jobs are created and lost, new knowledge systems are implemented and new boundaries are erected as the place of humans 'in nature' is reconsidered. A strong counter-discourse to 'neoliberal nature'¹⁸ is provided by Marxists such as David Harvey who state that enclosing nature goes paired with a form of intrinsically unequal asset accumulation and distribution. Harvey calls this 'accumulation by dispossession' (Harvey, 2009, p. 144) to emphasize the fact that 'primitive accumulation' (Marx's original term) is still ongoing and includes 'the commodification of labour power and the suppression of alternative (and indigenous) forms of production and consumption; colonial, neo-colonial and imperial processes of appropriation of assets...; and the monetization of exchange and taxation, particularly of land' (see also Arrighi, Aschoff, & Scully, 2010). Neil Smith, the late Marxist geographer, commented that this type of 'uneven development' through capitalism's expansionary ownership principles differs from other economies by creating two unnatural classes in society: 'on the one side a class who possess

¹⁸ If it is accepted that neoliberalism reinforces the principles of classical liberalism, critiques on its consequences to human-nature relations should equally be called upon.

the means of production for the whole society yet who do no labour, and on the other side a class who possess only their own labour power which they must sell to survive' (Smith, 2008, p. 382). Those who own nature are destined to create value out of it and must invest a portion of the created surplus value back into it to create more, while those who 'work nature' are alienated from the commodities they produce as well as from the means of production they use to produce them. Because the neoliberal agenda is growth-oriented, 'accumulation for accumulation's sake' is a socially imposed necessity (ibid, p. 383).

As a consequence, the construction of wild property goes paired with several socially disruptive dynamics that can translate the win-win discourse to lose-lose situations for local people who are framed as a threat to both conservation and to the economy at large. Mainly, authors have shown that the logic of enforcing private property rights on natures affects existing social relations by making access to it exclusive and excluding (Castree, 2010; Harvey, 2005; Mansfield, 2007; Marx & Engels, 1961; Smith, 2008 and others). The restriction of access may cause either prompted or unprompted migration of humans as well as constrained access to resources that are important for sustaining numerous livelihoods. Human rights concerns relating to displacements and mobility issues of humans is well documented (Brockington & Schmidt-Soltau, 2004; B. Dickson et al., 2009). These concerns should be furthered in the case of the production of the wild, as wild property is imagined and organized to be inhospitable to humans. It virtually and physically rules out human dwellings, pastures, and existing infrastructure, while pencilling in a network of strong property boundaries such as (electrified) fences and armed patrols. Furthermore, the blue print's preferred inhabitants include high-value but dangerous animals such as paciderms and large carnivores, which, in combination with legally enforced restrictions to harm them, make land less accessible.

Local inhabitants are in many cases included and in some form knotted into such economies, although this knotting in does not happen on their conditions (Spierenburg et al., 2006, 2008). However, various authors have showed that these wild development options backfire, by further disenfranchising marginal communities 'from their local resources as these become incorporated into extended market structures' (Brockington et al., 2008; Fletcher, 2010). As local inhabitants are awarded with some liberties to work or inhabit the land, privatized nature frequently means that they have to buy access to resources and services that were once in their own control (such as land, housing, water, fuel, food, wildlife). The resulting weakened position of these local communities may in turn prompt private business and international organisations to further capitalize on local resources and indigenous knowledge (Fletcher, 2010, p. 172). Besides this, neoliberal nature and its form of commodification may

alter local values and meanings ascribed to resources that impact overarching social and cultural dynamics within communities (ibid). These changes in the lives of people and their relationships are not often democratically enforced and are mostly implemented without local consultation. On top of this, because of the growing engagement of business and government, local representatives and labor unions may increasingly find their voices to be unsolicited (Butt, 2011, pp. 1–2).

Abridgement

The chapter examines theoretically how ‘wild’ entities are organized to be property and how boundaries that are organized to construct ‘wild property’ affect human relations. It has a specific focus on the production of nature through boundaries and studies these boundaries as things that are co-constructed in three different domains: as a product of human desires through imagined boundaries, as a legitimate and institutionalised version of nature through official boundaries, and by crafting material boundaries in the biophysical domain. These domains are thoroughly entangled. An imagined boundary, such as the distinction between wild and domestic animals, is legitimized through official classification that in turn may prescribe the construction of certain material boundaries (such as fences). Equally, legal boundaries may inspire new ideas about how to think about animals, which in turn may lead to new human-human as well as human-animal relations.

By illustrating the most significant mechanisms that are played out in neoliberalism’s engagement with nature, this chapter examines theoretically how ‘wild’ entities are imagined to be property and how boundaries that are organized to construct ‘wild property’ cause social transformations. Foremost, I argue that neoliberal nature necessarily leads to an intensification of both qualitative and quantitative resource individuation. Its growth-oriented approach paired by its aims to privatize and deregulate control over common resources requires an increasing amount of species, minerals, and biomass to be absorbed into financial systems and to be enacted as tradable products. New socio-technological advances enable this transformation by making it possible to dissect and exploit previously unseen nature, but also to marketise known nature by means of new (virtual) representations. The knife with which nature is being sliced from a complex and dynamic world has thereby become sharper: technologies have facilitated new material cuts which make the transportation, confinement and capture of nature easier and more elaborate, while new legal appraisals have facilitated complex legal cuts to patent, own and utilize nature. The fugitive nature of wildlife as a resource makes it difficult to create

markets based on them. Markets are more likely to operate efficiently if the traded goods are highly divisible, mobile and are uninfluenced by external effects when produced or consumed. Contemporary market-blueprints prescribe that the environmental market works best when entitlements to property are clearly defined and enforceable. One way around wildlife mobility, therefore, is to legally and materially ring-fence them as property (Delaney, 2001). This eliminates the problem of fluidity, but it creates one for animals that are valued for being feral. That is, when we produce new nature, can we still call it 'wild'?

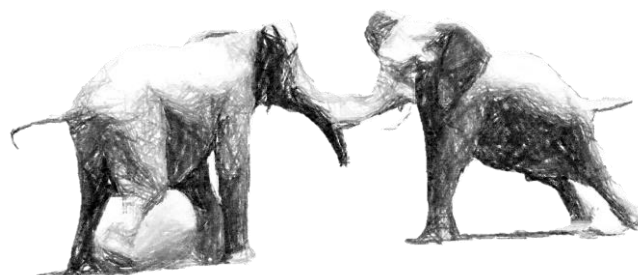
As markets are moving into unexplored territories, they are thus - somewhat paradoxically - extended to include those natural entities that are defined to be exactly the opposite of human products, entities that bear the predicate 'wild'. Two different definitions of the wild help understand the conversions of wild things to private property. Firstly, the conversions can be explained as a move towards domestication, as surplus value is created out of wild animals and land by means of agricultural practices such as the enclosing, taming, and breeding of biomass. Secondly, the conversions can be explained as a new human-nature relationship in which capital seeks to create property out of wild things without them losing their much-valued adjective 'wild'. This paradox of confined wildness is bridged, I believe, by a new understanding of the wild, as something that is imagined, organized, produced and managed by ourselves to be separate from us. Wild things are particular suitable for this conversion because they are natural entities with agency and the ability to sustain themselves without being intensively organized. Their status as commodities is obscured and this strong form of alienation makes them valuable and attractive resources that can effortlessly answer to desires for authentic and primordial nature, while at the same time concealing historical, political, and cultural struggles that may have been played out in their production process.

Many scholars have shown how material boundaries that aim to commodify nature are catalysts for these struggles: they generally fence more biomass than they desire to enclose and are more fortified than necessary. A problem arises concerning the social consequences of these fences. As Aldo Leopold remarked in 1966, the problem of game management is not how to handle the deer – the real problem is one of human management (in Braithwaite 2001). Putting up wildlife fences and translocating wild animals has become comparatively easy; the management of humans living and working around wildlife remains troublesome. Conversions to game farms reportedly lead to human rights violations such as forced displacements, disrupted livelihoods, mobility problems, and restricted access to resources and land, particularly for those humans who are poorly integrated into the global capital system and have little say in the planning of new nature. Wild property may well amplify these social

disruptions, because the wild is mostly idealized and produced to be inhospitable to humans. Existing dwellings, pastures, and infrastructure are erased from the blueprint, while electrified fences, armed patrols, and dangerous animals are pencilled in.

The production of the wild is not only realized in the countryside by individual landowners however. Each unit of nature that is to be sliced and commodified needs to be legitimized, classified, and infused with meaning (can it be owned, traded, destroyed, and under what conditions?) through government information systems. Visions on the wild need to be officially endorsed and by means of incessant political processes, each contemporary state has produced and reproduced such official category-systems. Therefore it is fruitful to see the wild as an organized biopolitical project in which stakeholders compete to institutionalize their versions of the wild. This competition happens in field configuring events; formal and informal meetings, forums, and arenas in which actors try and conform others to support and adopt their official boundaries of nature.

As the wild is negotiated and institutionalized in political forums (in which it is ambivalent how power configurations are to be played out and arguments often go beyond scientific, economic and techno-rational analysis), it is important to study which stakeholders are involved, who may produce policy texts, and who is excluded. Furthermore, analysis must recognize that political boundaries are created through a path-dependent process that maintains 'archaeological residue' and may have remnants of colonial, neo-colonial and imperial times (Starr, 1992). 'World making as we know it always starts from worlds already on hand; the making is remaking', Goodman states (1981, p. 6). A scrutiny of the political boundaries of the wild should therefore not only involve an understanding of (i) organizational forms and (ii) political dynamics that are involved in the process of legitimization the wild, it should also reflect on (iii) its historical contexts.





ZOOLOGY.

“Station Master say, Mum, as Cats is ‘Dogs’, and Rabbits is ‘Dogs,’ and so’s Parrots; but this ere ‘Tortis’ is a Insect, so there ain’t no charge for it!” in Ritvo, 1997

Chapter III A New Farming Game

In June 1991, one month before the unbanned ANC held its first national conference and elected Nelson Mandela as President of the organisation, the Game Theft Act (GTA) was discussed in Parliament. The discussion concentrated on the legal standing of wildlife in the Republic and more specifically on the relation between land ownership and wildlife ownership. The proposed law promulgated a national framework that, for the first time in South African history, made it legal for landowners to own wildlife and by this means illegal for others than the landowner to hunt, pursue, capture or 'poach' wildlife on his or her grounds. Before, wildlife had always been classified according to common law as *res nullius*. Undomesticated animals belonged to nobody and were regulated and managed strictly by the State. The *res nullius* status of wildlife, which is still upheld in most parts of the world today, prohibits private possession and commercialization of wildlife by law (Muir-Leresche & Nelson, 2000). The Game Theft Act however, was to alter the status of wild animals on private land by legally dividing wildlife into two categories, either 'owned game' or 'unowned wildlife'. These categories had very different incentives attributed to them and the new division invited a rethinking of the classical animal dichotomy of 'wild' versus 'domesticated'. As a Mr Hendrickse of the National Party (NP) critically noted on discussing the act in Parliament, the courts were to 'be kept busy and the lawyers smiling in deciding on what is game and what is not' (Hansard 1991: 11433). The member of the House of Representatives also warned for landowners who could make use of the vague boundaries for their own good. 'Be wary', Mr. Hendrickse spoke, 'of irate farmers maliciously trying to include animals in the definition for their own ends' (ibid). As we will see in the following chapter the Speaker was quite right: the introduction of 'owned game' was the beginning of an incessant debate on the relationship between species and between landowners and government. Which organisms are wild, which are domesticated and which can be owned? Why does one receive tax deductions for breeding cows and not for breeding rhinos? What status does a privately owned animal have once it escapes? Why can one hunt kudu and not elephants? And, in a country in which democracy, equality and non-racialism were soon to be accepted as the political middle-of-the-road, a new question arose: what role could wildlife ownership play in addressing acute inequality?

The Game Theft Act was passed swiftly and unanimously. Besides introducing many questions, the legal ratification of it was also a conclusion. It ended a decades-long episode of ardent debates between farmers, landowners and government officials. The following pages explore these debates and set out to query dominant social ideas on wildlife production in South

Africa by employing a socio-historical approach. It is thereby not my intention to give a complete and comprehensive overview of South Africa's history or its wildlife policy. Rather, I am looking to find out how private wildlife ownership came about, how it was tightly tied to land ownership and how landless people became detached from wildlife.

The rise of today's wildlife industry and wildlife privatization is commonly believed to have originated in the 1960s. Wildlife initiatives by farmers, combined with policies that aimed to devolve animal ownership and responsibility to private landowners are identified as essential in this regard (e.g. Carruthers, 2008; Duffy, 2000; Wels, 2003). By tracking back legislative red tape to prior times, this chapter attempts to show that there was already a strong move towards privatization and commoditization of wildlife before this. To demonstrate this, the chapter first describes the interface between various narratives on subsistence, sportsmanship, and cultivation that were prevalent in early-day South Africa amongst Africans, Brits, and Boers (Dutch and other European descendants and later, more generally, white South African who speak Afrikaans). Important discourse coalitions were established amongst these diffuse groups that have a lasting impact on the place and meaning of wildlife in South Africa. National and provincial governments, which until very recently were dominated by Brits and Boers, decoded the meanings of wildlife into policy texts by prescribing legal practices related to the access, ownership, and utilization of wildlife.

To unravel these meanings, three specific sets of wildlife policy were chosen to guide the chapter: the Game Laws of the late 19th Century, which formally exempted landowners from conservation policies; the 1967 Cape Ordinance of Nature Conservation, which introduced Certificates of Adequate Enclosure and game fencing regulations; and finally the Game Theft Act of 1991 which established wildlife ownership on a national level. Besides reflecting upon the content of these policies, the text deals with the societal and the political debates surrounding their implementation by analyzing hearings, committee reports, news sources, secondary literature and personal interviews with stakeholders. By studying wildlife politics surrounding the adoption of 'game' laws, the first section attempts to show the recurring power of landowners to achieve exemption from wildlife restrictions and thereby the possibility to gain wildlife monopolies. The second part of the chapter comments on wildlife policy under apartheid, in the period 1948-1994. It is argued here that in continuation of colonial policy, South Africa's wildlife ownership laws were fortified and attached to land ownership. The life history of one wildlife farmer and union leader, Mr Harry Pemberton, is trailed throughout these years. Upscaling and industrialisation are words that typify his times.

A problematic issue of studying South Africa's policy history through texts however is that it tends to omit the views of politically and socially marginalized groups. Hardly any, if any, African or female actors were voiced in debates surrounding the mentioned legislation and this should, particularly in racialized South Africa, be born in mind. Especially when studying the topic of state classifications of wildlife we are confronted with a Southern African history that was documented by white males, as state legislation between 1652 up until the late 20th century was exclusively debated, agreed to and enforced by such persons. As Achille Mbembe stated we must understand that 'there is an 'entanglement' of colours in South Africa... There is no black history in South Africa that doesn't involve whiteness. The history is an entanglement of colour lines'.¹⁹ Similarly there is no white history in South Africa that doesn't involve blackness. By critically studying debates and policy texts that were created by white South African males our understanding may be fractional, but it is nevertheless relevant to understanding the archaeological residue that is still present in today's official policies and society.

Company Capitalism

With the arrival of the Dutch East Indies Company (VOC) in the Cape in 1652 came a European ideal of improvement. Historian Kay Anderson describes this ideal as one that justified the selection of flora and fauna for cultivation and that sought to reclaim the frontiers of the 'New World' from their wildness (Anderson, 1997, p. 488). Although the Cape was intentionally not more than an isolated refreshment station for ships on route to South East Asia it was not long before the first Governor of the Cape, Jan van Riebeeck, was provoked by this wildness. Company employees, free 'burghers', and traders alike found themselves in constant competition with Cape wildlife, especially with carnivores. Van Riebeeck had forbidden the hunting of most animals, but in June 1656 introduced a bounty system which offered rewards for the killing of 'particularly lions, 'wolve' [hyenas], and leopards' (Hey, 1995, p. 160). As carnivores were 'made killable' from then on, in light of the cultivation ideal, the destruction of wildlife was justified as both a civic as an economic duty. Additionally, the financially attractive reward-system introduced an economic mechanism that soon created an extensive wildlife market. Many settlers at the time wished to trade their labour-intensive livelihoods at the VOC-station for other lifestyles. With the valorisation of wild animals a more independent

¹⁹ Quoted in the inaugural lecture of Pierre de Vos at the University of Cape Town, September 14 2011

lifestyle based on hunting and extensive pastoralism became possible (Pollock & Agnew, 1963). The richness in wildlife was of particularly great attraction to poor people and young starters, who found extra incentives in the financial imbursements for proofs²⁰. The illegal but lucrative trade that stemmed from the ban on wildlife hunting and the corresponding new lifestyles quickly led to governmental aggravations. Governor Simon van der Stel complained that ‘not only does wildlife get systematically eradicated and repelled, but too many colonists make their daily work out of it; they become lazy and abandon agriculture’ (Van der Merwe, 1945, p. 11).

Nevertheless, in the last quarter of the seventeenth century the Company joined the bandwagon by issuing licences for the shooting of wildlife and thereby commodifying wildlife for its own profit (Van Sittert, 2005, p. 273). Although it is not clear to what extent people made their living from wildlife, the apparatus of bounties and licenses seems to have influenced many. Wildlife hunting and trading made a mobile lifestyle possible, in which one needn’t have much more than a loaded gun and an ox-wagon to live an independent life (Van der Merwe 1945: 17). In so doing, settlers expanded the Cape’s boundaries in search of new pastures and wildlife. With the increasing distance from Cape Town, new landowners felt more and more alienated from the stringent wildlife regulations that the governing elite laid upon them. Hunting regulations and license-fees went ignored as new wildlife-related practices came into existence (Van Sittert, 2005). Due to the rapid replacement of antelopes by livestock, Cape carnivores adapted as well (Beinart, 2008, p. 197). As one diary states, lions ‘seemed almost to storm the fort to get at the sheep which were kept inside’ (Skead, 1982, p. 150). Docile colonial stock and domesticated horses proved to be easy feedings, and consequently lead to a further increase in human-wildlife conflicts. Wildlife thus secured an ambivalent position in the psyche of Cape settlers, bringing about opportunities for enrichment and sport as well as economic menace (Brown, 2002, p. 80).

In the next century, the licensing system was reconfigured to include ‘big game’. Mr. CF Damberger, who visited the Cape in 1789, recorded the prices for killing wild beasts at three ‘riks-dalers’ for an elephant, two for a rhinoceros, giraffe or eland and one for a lion or zebra (Hey 1995: 160). The company government was found to be very sympathetic towards big game hunters and accommodated as well as stimulated them to pursue elephants. A plausible explanation for this is the existing state revenue of ten percent taxes that was charged over all

²⁰ Wild animal body parts such as tails, talons, heads and skins were required as proofs in order to claim the bounty.

ivory. In advancing hunter's issues the company government recurrently addressed the prices for ivory-export with the High Government of Batavia, and urged them to lower these costs for hunters (Van der Merwe 1945: 37).

Meanwhile, the pursuit of pastures was constrained by native frontiers. Even though the Cape was the only southern hemisphere colony in which indigenous communities relied on domesticated animals (Beinart 2008:7), like flora and fauna, indigenous people were framed to be 'wild' or 'undomesticated' (Anderson, 1997, p. 488). As Europeans travelled eastward to find greener pastures, groups such as the Xhosas moved westward seeking 'exactly the same things' (Skead, 2007, p. 457). Similar to the settler-hunters, these communities hunted for subsistence and traded commodities while herding livestock (Carruthers, 2005). With the wide array of carnivores that inhabited Southern Africa, predator threat was a serious concern to all livestock farmers. The Khoikhoi dealt with this by returning stock to their settlements each night. In a circle of fenced off 'kraals', or huts, sheep and cattle were held safe amongst people and protected against threats from outside. Settler-hunters learnt from these practices and shortly adopted a similar 'kraaling' system with thorny bushed tak-kraals that kept preferred species in and unpreferred species out (Beinart 2008).

Cape Colonialism

The Battle of Muizenberg in 1795 led to British rule in the Cape. The British were keen on their hunting traditions and had constructed a web of wildlife classifications and regulations in England. These ideas were, at least at a rhetorical level, different in ideology to the former rulers. For instance, the capitalist vermin bounty was re-installed by the British, but found itself reworded as a 'game preservation' measure. Plans in 1800 to enforce other British preservation regulations, such as the establishment of hunting seasons and game licensing, were met with considerable hostility by the rural gentry. In the countryside wildlife went virtually unprotected by game laws as regulations were 'promptly revoked outside a fifty kilometre radius of Cape Town'.²¹ Afrikaners or Boers, seized the right 'to shoot for travelling consumption', to kill game out of season and regulate hunting on their own farms'.²² Cape officials publicly doubted their game laws and uttered that they seemed futile in 'a country so thinly peopled' and where they caused such 'an engine of oppression'.²³ On the whole, British rule in the Cape proved

²¹ G. M. Theal, *Records of the Cape Colony* (London, 1898), III, 195–7; and Theal, *Records*, IV (London, 1899), 42, 225, 316, 478–9.

²² Theal, *Records*, X, 137; and Theal, *Records*, XI, 137. In LVS 273

²³ CA, CO 4010, 3, Memorial M.M., 12 Aug. 1841.

arduous to impose as various communities felt their rights were being breached. Resettlement schedules in the Eastern Cape were vehemently opposed by Xhosa communities, while Boers became less tolerable of anything British. The attempted prohibition and restriction to utilize wildlife underpinned such tensions (Thompson 2001; Meredith 2008), although the British abolishment of slavery in 1833 is often mentioned as the measure that provoked thousands of Afrikaners to leave the Cape in what became known as the Great Trek. In Paul Kruger's memoirs for example, the old 'lion' states that his parents emigrated north because the English bought and released their slaves; 'they refused to live under such unjust masters' (1902:1-2). Accompanied by ox wagons and 'facilitated by significant wildlife populations', a 'Trekboer phalanx' went north to ultimately establish the independent Free State and Transvaal republics (Beinart & Hughes, 2007, p. 63).

With the breakaway of this community, South Africa's wildlife was hunted by Africans, Boers and Brits. All three held complex and dynamic classificatory records of the wild animals they encountered. They all raised questions whether animals were to be domesticated or left wild, whether they provided provisions or were consecrated and whether they were hazardous or should be protected (Beinart, 1990). The answers led to polarized hunting cultures – and each group developed a different set of attitudes to support its point of view (Carruthers, 1989).

Wildlife Sportsmanship

During the 18th Century, the hunting and killing of wild animals as a form of recreation or as some say, a ritual, had become agreeable (S. K. Thomas, 1983). The sport of hunting was restricted to the nobles and landed gentry who organized symbolic battles between humans and animals and framed them in the dichotomy 'civilization versus wilderness' (S. K. Thomas, 1983). Hunters could not afford to lose face in such battles and for this reason the hunt often consisted of an elaborate campaign with advanced preparations that ensured success. Leisure hunting was hereby clearly separated from subsistence hunting. Southern Africa provided an imposing extension to sport hunters, not in the least because 'it was free from some of the restrictive hierarchies and social customs which characterized [sport hunting] in Britain' (Beinart & Hughes, 2007, p. 67). Also, nineteenth century England was subject to processes of industrialization and urbanization and was by many sportsmen perceived to have become crowded or even full. Contrary to this 'landscape of private property', Africa maintained 'a savage loneliness' (Harris, 1840, p. 62 in Carruthers, 2005). A Mr. Atcherley neatly summarized these emotions:

You are under no apprehension of trespassing; nobody can warn you off. You can kick out your legs and sprawl, without danger of breaking something or knocking out somebody's eye. Nobody is here to bother about the man coming to be paid for the gas, or even to tell you to get up and 'behave'. You do not care a rap for politics or the symmetry of your neck-tie. Nothing restrains you. You can expand your lungs and breathe God's free air withal sense of glorious independence. There is bread and meat in the bag; some brandy even left in the bottle. No king is happier than you (Atcherley 1879: 141-142).

Historian Harriet Ritvo describes how killing large exotic animals fit this particular narrative as a 'quintessential activity and symbol of imperialism' (Ritvo, 2002, p. 33). Similar to Anderson's view on reclaiming wildness, Ritvo shows that wildlife was perceived to be an obstacle that prevented a march towards civilization. Shooting wild animals in the 'savage loneliness' was not only considered a majestic pastime, it also helped reclaim the imperial frontiers from their wildness. Historian John MacKenzie named the 'imperial' hunting that went paired with this 'The Hunt', a marker of white dominance, manliness and sportsmanship (MacKenzie, 1987). In a striking process of anthropomorphism, hunters picked 'fair' fights with the largest and most attractive male antelopes. The amalgamation of sportsmanship and masculinity resulted in fierce competition in which the quantity and quality of animals that were shot was of great importance. After triumph, trophies were measured and, from 1892 onwards, published in Rowland Ward's *Records of Big Game*. Through this publication the competition for African 'game' gained a formal and internationally recognized register (which is still published and defines wildlife standards today, see Chapter VI). Wrapped in traveller's accounts, the attractive arrangement of leisure, competition and empire-building both fuelled and shaped imperial hunting (Beinart, 1990, p. 165). Important contributions were made by what Frederick Nash labels South Africa's first 'ecotourists' (Nash & Russell, 1979, p. 519), nineteenth century adventurers, hunters and naturalists who published their accounts in Britain.²⁴ Nash speaks of a new international market in which African animals as well as the 'experience' of African wildness became tradable commodities. Where human-wildlife interactions once revolved around the extraction of material goods that served as provisions or as leisure items, African wildlife slowly transformed into a non-extractive commodity for the masses. A grand market uncluttered which traded countless publications of photos, books, pamphlets and stories that offered the 'African wilderness'. An important contribution to this

²⁴ Such as Baldwin (1863), Cumming (1850, 1911), Harris (1840, 1852) and Selous (1897, 1908).

market was made in 1888 by George Eastman, a big game hunter who launched the Kodak camera. The camera was portable, light and easy to use so that anybody with an interest, some money and common sense could make photos. The term ‘snapshot’, a hunting term, was soon translated to the world of photography, as well as associated metaphors such as ‘stalking’, ‘prey’ and ‘shooting’ (Phillips et al., 2010). Socio-technical advances in the field of communication helped connecting wildlife commodities to the expanding market. Infrastructural improvements of roads, boats and railways were eagerly welcomed by the globalizing sport hunting community. At the same time, hunters had begun to reposition themselves in society. ‘I am not a hunter by nature, I am a naturalist’, Frederick Selous said (in Brown 2002:84). The killing of wildlife was not a mere game anymore, it had become legitimized as a contribution to science.

Landed Boers

With the Afrikaner ‘Groote trek’ moving northbound, the mid-nineteenth century English sport-hunter was not the only white man in the interior of southern Africa anymore. He did however regard his form of hunting to be ‘civilised’, while market hunting by Boers was perceived to be ‘evil’. Only ‘backward’ people, such as Boers and Africans, would kill animals for their skins or meat. In Britain it was commonly believed at the time that eating too much venison was both unhealthy and uncivilized. Boers and Africans were considered lower class for enjoying this staple diet (Aylward, 1878, p. 239 in Carruthers 2005). Vice versa, there was not much understanding for British hunting. According to one account, David Livingstone once tried explaining the qualities of sport hunting to a group of Africans and had the greatest difficulty (Gray, 1979, pp. 105–6). Together with Boers they perceived sportsmen who discarded wildlife products both repulsive and wasteful (Carruthers, 1995, pp. 40–41).

With the creation of the Free State and Transvaal Republic, the Great Trek came to a halt some 1300 kilometres North of Cape Town. The Trek embraced and reinforced ‘Boer Culture’ and was often paralleled to biblical chronicles (notably by Paul Kruger himself in Kruger, 1902). The Afrikaans author Theunissen wrote that ‘an infinite desire for hunting existed amongst all Boers; from 14-year old youngsters to 60 year old “grijsaards” (literally: grey people, or elders)’ (Theunissen in van der Merwe 1945: 11). Because of the complementary trade and subsistence benefits, wildlife hunting became central to the Boer community. Once the Boers settled from their great trek, the lucrative business of wild animal trade intensified. In 1855 it was estimated that 90 000 kg of ivory was exported from the

Transvaal, together with vast quantities of hides and horns (Carruthers, 1995, p. 21). Wildlife commodities were shipped through the ports of Natal and the Cape, and game meat was consumed to offset the growth of stock populations. Carruthers estimates that market hunting sustained the independence of the Transvaal republic during a whole generation (Carruthers, 2005). A Mr. Bryden wrote it to be, ‘a sad reflection that the descendants of these pioneers became [...] mere mercenary skin hunters, slaying the game for the paltry value of the hides, and quickly denuding vast territories of almost every head of the larger mammalian’ (Bryden 1897 in Skead, 2007). As a powerful land-owning class of Boers emerged an wildlife increased in value, landowners also attempted to appropriate animals. Although wildlife was – in terms of the adopted Roman-Dutch law – recognized as *res nullius*, a British magazine of the time noted with wonder that Boers ‘think a great deal of [...] the preservation of game on their farms. They live upon buck, and consider them private property’ (Anon, 1881).

Attitudes towards African communities

The history of wildlife use by African communities is a long one. Wildlife occupied a central place in lineage and governance systems throughout the Cape. Symbolically, wildlife was often ‘a critical sphere for the assertion of royal economic control’ (Beinart, 1990), while most African hunting was related to subsistence and trade.²⁵ Following the arrival of settlers in the Cape, wildlife utilization was gradually both physically and legally excluded from South African communities. While power struggles between urban and rural gentries played a role in ‘white’ wildlife politics, attitudes towards Africans wildlife consumption were marked by racial exploitation and restriction. In the Transvaal exploitative partnerships were brought about by Boers who recruited so-called ‘swart skutte’ or ‘jagtkaffers’ to maximize profit (Carruthers, 1989, p. 20). Particularly when ‘the ivory’ retreated to areas dominated by tsetse flies, white hunters engaged in these partnerships ‘which maximized ivory exports while minimizing risks to themselves’ (MacKenzie, 1987, p. 44). Payment for these as well as other dealings often came in the form of wildlife meat, which was to ‘sweeten’ local populations. This resource was disregarded by many white hunters, but thus became an important subsidy to secure labour and wield power over African populations (MacKenzie, 1987, p. 46). Abiding by Kay Anderson’s premises, many British portrayals showed Africans to be ‘savage, wanton killers’ because they survived on wildlife products and ignored hunting seasons (cf.

²⁵ See for instance John MacKenzie (1987a,b) as well as Skead 2007 on Xhosa and Khoikhoi practices.

Agricultural Journal of the Cape of Good Hope in Brown, 2002). Comparable to narratives on the destruction of bison by Native Americans, it was at the time common to blame Africans for the destruction of nature (see Beinart, 1990, p. 167). Under Afrikaner nationalism, this line of reasoning penetrated deep into the 20th Century. The authoritative historian Jack Skead confesses amazement to learn that ‘the Blacks’ did not wipe out everything, writing that ‘this has been a revelation to this author who had always accepted unthinkingly the trend of traditional assumption’ (Skead 2007: 460-461). The author painted an early 19th century Eastern Cape that was teeming with wildlife based on a vast range of travel journals. One of these travellers stated that ‘the number of bucks now before our eyes beat all computation; ... herds of thousands and tens of thousands of springboks, interspersed with troops of wildebeest’ (Butler 1969: 67). Charles Darwin, who visited the Cape in 1836, wrote that ‘with regards to the numbers of large quadrupeds, there certainly exists no quarter of the globe that will bear comparison with Southern Africa (Darwin, 1906, p. 85). As sightings of colossal herds ceased, politics (whether from British, Apartheid or current ANC-officials) decides who and what caused their disappearance.

In the nineteenth and most part of the twentieth century Africans were mainly pointed out as scapegoats in this narrative, and they were punished for it by means of legal and physical boundaries. By arguing that Africans were primitives who did not understand natural resource management and game conservation, landowners and the state gradually seized control over the region’s land, water, flora and fauna. Killing wildlife by either trapping or snaring (common practices for de-armed African communities) was seen to be unethical and several policies were implemented to forbid this ‘cruelty’. Firearms were considered the only ‘ethical’ and thus legal measure to kill wildlife and, as the Peace Preservation Act of 1878 prohibited Africans from using firearms an unambiguously racial exclusion to wildlife was brought about. Whether black people were landowners or not, at the end of the 19th Century whites had legally classified wildlife in such a manner as to withhold Africans from consuming it. Effectively, non-white hunting was made illegal and labelled ‘poaching’.

Game Laws and Agricultural Development

Hunting rules remained contested in the Cape where government had great problems enforcing ‘res nullius’ measures on landowners in the absence of a rural police force (Van Sittert, 2005, p. 34). When biltong, a South African dried meat often made from wildlife, was besieged by the Cape government, many defended it: ‘to say that this food product of the country [biltong]

is to be wasted in such a fashion is, I think, bringing legislation to a ridiculous pass' (Nicholson in Carruthers, 1995, p. 111). General De La Rey in the Transvaal unsuccessfully complained about hunting licences that, at three pounds, he found too expensive. He stated that this caused hunting to remain the privilege of the rich (Carruthers, 1989, p. 44). Such voices remained in the cold and unlicensed hunting as well as the marketing of biltong was outlawed completely.

In 1867 a select committee was appointed to consider and report upon the Game Laws of 1822, which the chairman saw to be 'in some respects antiquated and unsuitable – it is openly disregarded by all classes of the Community' (Report of the Select Committee appointed by the Honourable, the House of Assembly, on the 27th June, to consider and report upon the Game Laws Bill, 1867, p. 11). The chairman reasoned that civilians bought hunting licences in eight out of fifty districts only, and concluded that fraud was 'openly committed on the public revenue with impunity' (ibid.). Moreover, the existing Game Law was created under the governance of Lord Somerset and contained clauses that could not easily be interpreted other than being self-seeking. The 9th clause for instance reserved rights to hunt at places in Groenkloof with respect to the preservation of game, but as was noted it in fact created an exclusive and 'snug shooting place for Lord C Somerset' (Layard 1867). Various committee hearings were planned in which it became clear that a new elite had gained political power, the rural gentry. A proposal was made to exempt landowners from taking out a license to shoot in their own field-cornetry, or even in their own division (Report of the Select Committee appointed by the Honourable, the House of Assembly, on the 27th June, to consider and report upon the Game Laws Bill, 1867, p. 13). 'But what would this mean for our revenue?', was the quick counter question. In terms of state income one would only 'get a hold of all the inhabitants of the towns and all non-owners of property'. Bringing up statistics showing that landowners were not taking up licenses anyways and suggesting that landowning 'burghers, as a body', were undoubtedly 'the best defendants of the frontier against the natives' the proposal was met favourably (ibid., p.14). Natives, being equal citizens under English law, were hereby also forced to take out licenses. Hence Africans, landowners with less than a suggested 1000 morgen (white or non-white), and those who had no land were those to be taxed. In a discussion that centred on revenue maximization new penalties were created for those handling game without a license (ibid. p.17). Narratives of wildlife protection and licensed hunting were not enforced so swiftly. Only on the ninth attempt in 1886 could a majority of votes pass the 'Act for the Better Preservation of Game'. The Elephant, bontebok, gemsbok, and Burchells zebra 'whose imminent extinction was feared' found themselves re-classified and protected as 'Royal Game' (Brown, 2002, p. 85). Hence, the animal kingdom was conjured into a new hierarchy.

Conservation versus Production

The 'Act for the Better Preservation of Game' grew out to be defining legislation for the century to come and is often seen as an important accomplishment for both the arising conservation and sport hunting movements (MacKenzie 1987; Brown 2002). Trespassing with guns or dogs and shooting at royal game became offences, as did the possession of their flesh, skins, hides or horns (ibid.). Hunting at night or by means other than shooting was also outlawed and all owners of greyhounds - except for landholders and kennel or coursing clubs - were subject to a £5 tax. The rural gentry accepted the Act, but ensured exemption from most hunting regulations for themselves and their acquaintances.²⁶ As a result, historian Lance van Sittert argues this provided 'an effective legal monopoly over game animals that could be converted into either profit or patronage' (Van Sittert, 2005, p. 50). The rise of strict hunting and conservation policies in the last quarter of the 19th Century seems to indicate an escalation of class struggle, more than anything else. Landowners, sportsmen, visitors and urban elites were either exempted from hunting licenses or could afford them while poor whites and Africans were barred from natural resources that were necessary for survival. Not only did the new laws provide a legal framework, they also provided momentum for policy enforcement. Prosecutions regarding wildlife crime strongly increased after the passing of the 1886 game laws. Virtually all of the accused were men of which almost two thirds were black (Van Sittert, 2005, p. 43). 'Poor whites' were equally targeted by game regulations, although African 'poachers' bore the real brunt. Knut Nustad shows that many Africans and Europeans complained about the new conservation policies as it led to an increase of wildlife around human settlements. This posed risks for livelihoods, lives and agriculture, but also was associated with the spreading of sicknesses such as 'nagana', which killed cattle. This turned both 'the disease and the game legislation into a political problem' (Nustad, 2011, p. 96).

European killing and over-exploitation of wildlife was not penalized however (Van der Merwe 1945: 12). Consequently, by the end of the 19th Century, the Cape Colony and Boer republics found their wildlife populations to be 'denuded'. Wild frontiers were replaced by privatized new landscape of white and cultivated settlements. As a result of the vast growth in the wool industry particularly sheep numbers grew enormous. William Beinart estimates that sheep numbers climbed from 1.5 million non-wooled sheep in 1806 (mostly adopted from the

²⁶ Bill for the Better Preservation of Game, CGHGG, 5589, 30 June 1876

Khoikhoi) to 10 million imported Merino wool sheep in 1875 (2003:9). The proportion of livestock in the Cape thereby outnumbered people. Virtually all livestock's wool was exported to England, where from the late 18th Century onwards, domestic wool was considered unsuitable for garments (Beinart 2008: 3). During the 'wool-boom' human-wildlife conflict regarding livestock predation grew to an unprecedented height. Van der Merwe states that by wiping out large predators such as the Cape lion, 'man made large areas safe for the jackal' (Van der Merwe 1945, p. 47). He hereby meant that solitary and less conspicuous hunters like jackals and caracals spread throughout settler country, an issue that is still hotly debated in rural communities today (Natrass & Conradie, 2013).

Where arable farmers saw benefit in predators controlling their hare populations, the politically powerful sheep farmers preferred to destroy the jackal and 'have the hare' (Beinart, 1990, p. 192). To prevent predators from taking stock sheep were 'kraaled' at night. As a result, a mass migration of millions of animals occurred on a daily basis (Beinart, 1998, p. 177). Due to copious financial inefficiencies, the kraaling system was increasingly criticized. To begin with, significant labour investments were necessary to drive such mass migrations. The constant relocations asked their toll from livestock, which 'lost condition, yielded less wool and meat [...] and produced fewer offspring' (ibid). Livestock trampling caused soil erosion, downgraded pastures and thereby reduced farm-value. Also, with contemporary medical Development schemes to facilitate the wool-industry, disease narratives were widespread. Government passed a Scab Act in 1886, which beleaguered the close contact between sheep in small kraal-compounds to cause scab. Dissent regarding the method of kraaling caused farmers and politicians to re-evaluate the root of their problems once more. Van Sittert writes that riddance of kraaling-systems was perceived as 'impossible until the Carnivora are destroyed' (Van Sittert, 1998, p. 338). As carnivores showed a remarkable resilience to this human attempt to destroy them, in time the impasse led to the complete fencing of agricultural South Africa in addition to a market-based witch hunt for wildlife that was (often wrongly) labelled as 'predators'.

Vermin and fencing

The legal definitions given to animals in the new laws imposed a new hierarchy amongst species that reflected the whims of time. While certain 'royal game' species were considered to need special protection, others were excluded from the animal kingdom altogether. Most carnivores found themselves to be redefined as 'ongedierte', which literally means 'non-

animals' in Afrikaans and deemed them to be exterminable for the sake of pastoral development. The inclusion or exclusion of species from this list fluctuated over time and included many blameless animals. Wild dog, lion, leopard, cheetah, crocodile, jackal and hyena were some of the usual suspects on the list. The term 'jackal' however also encompassed the aardwolf, Cape fox, and bat-eared fox, all of which are insectivorous. Due to its habit of burrowing underneath fences, the ant bear was also included (Hey 1995: 161). Farmers were convinced that these animals killed sheep and 'rejected all attempts to prove the contrary' (Van Sittert, 1998). After various private initiatives in which farming organizations paid bounties for carnivore proofs, the Eastern Cape rural gentry successfully lobbied for a state subsidy in 1889. In the following two decades the state accepted more than 500.000 proofs (two-thirds of them 'jackal') against a price of roughly £145,000. Wild animal poisoning or vermin clubs became fashionable in the 1880s and members consisted of farmers and professional hunters. Beinart shows that in Vryburg the four biggest claimants, who received over 200 pounds per annum, were black. In the Northern Cape, as well, a 'living is undoubtedly made by many Natives and Bastards out of the rewards obtained for tails of vermin and some farmers are stated to allow native squatters on their farms for the sole purpose of destroying vermin, the reward being shared' (1998, p. 191). Ironically, farmers complained that 'owing to the large amounts paid for tails, natives... had become too independent to work.' Farm workers only received an estimated ten percent of the amounts bounty hunters claimed (Beinart, 1998, p. 191), but nevertheless some farmers feared losing labour to the bounty industry.

To receive rewards for the extermination of jackal and other vermin, it was necessary to prove the kill. With birds of prey, it was common to use heads or talons, but in the case of mammals, the decomposing heads made a neither pretty nor hygienic sight. For this reason, animal tails were deemed sufficient proof. The introduction of this system not only created a trade market for tails and vermin, it also stimulated abuse and fraud. Investigation into such practices commenced when large numbers of rewards were claimed in Border districts. It was suspected that vermin was being farmed in the North West and that trade in vermin had extended to German South West Africa, Bechuanaland, and allegedly even to Europe. According to a local official, 'the Colonial Government is therefore paying for the destruction of vermin reared and bred in a neighbouring state' (Van Sittert, 1998, p. 51). Inspection revealed different forms of proofing fraud as well. Many household ornaments, dusters and false meerkat and jackal tails were reported. Requirements for proofs became stricter, demanding tails with bones, then scalps with ears, full skins and even written proof by landowners or officials. Accounts of fraud remained persistent though, and opponents of the

bounty claim stated that ‘vermin extermination was an intrinsically sound farming practice that did not require additional incentive in the form of a state subsidy’ (Van Sittert, 1998). In 1908, under British rule, the bounty system was aborted, while local rewards stayed available (Beinart, 1998, p. 197). This bounty system did not cease when the Union of South Africa was founded as a dominion of the British Empire in 1910; ‘the new Cape provincial state revived the bounty system and continued it, with only minor adjustments, until 1956’ (Van Sittert, 1998, p. 357). In this time segregationist policy increased and white South Africans obtained supreme control over the management of land, the economy, and over nature. ‘There are certain things about which all South Africans are agreed’, General Smuts stated in the Union House of Assembly in 1945, ‘all parties and all sections, except those who are quite mad. The first is that it is a fixed policy to maintain white supremacy in South Africa.’²⁷

Apartheid’s Segregation of Humans and Wildlife

The inauguration of Prime Minister Malan in 1948 and his ministers Verwoerd and Strydom furnished South Africa with a segregationist set of classifications known as apartheid. New-born rules subdivided humans into four policy categories: whites, blacks, coloureds or Indians. The 1950 Population Registration Act required ethnic registration of every South African, the Group Areas Act required each town or city to be divided into separated ethnic residential areas. The 1951 Squatting Act helped the government to legally remove non-whites from public and private grounds, while the 1952 Natives Act forced black people to carry identification as well as work permits in urban areas (the ‘Pass Laws’). Following suit, provincial conservation laws introduced segregationist categories to make sense of nature. The 1955 Natal Nature Conservation Ordinance dictates that ‘no person shall employ any non-European to hunt or capture game’. One was allowed to employ non-Europeans for assistance, ‘but such non-Europeans shall not carry or use firearms or assegais’.²⁸ The other provinces repeated these prescriptions in the years to come. At first sight, such environmental legislation seems far less explicit in its racial underpinnings than socio-economic policy. Instead of race, policy usually referenced land ownership and family ties to tacitly exclude non-whites. As the web of apartheid, backed by prior laws such as the Native Land Act of 1913, had rendered it legally impossible for blacks to own large tracts of land, ‘landownership’ became a legal proxy for ‘white’. A seemingly neutral reference to ‘relatives’ or ‘family members’ formed a proxy

²⁷ General J. G. Smuts, Prime Minister, speaking in the Union House of Assembly, Cape Town, March 13, 1945.

²⁸ Natal Nature Conservation Ordinance, 15 of 1955 p.82.

twice over as marriage between white and non-whites was prohibited (Ross, 1975). In the Transvaal for instance 'landowners or their relatives are allowed to hunt any animal that are causing damage to stock, or are about to cause damage to stock'.²⁹ Besides containing implicit racism, this particular law also exempted landowners and relatives from conservation laws because of the freedom to interpret 'about to cause harm' (ibid). It posed economic ideals above conservation.

In some cases, racial terms could not be avoided though. The Free State created hunting exemptions for 'the owner of land on which the game is hunted or a white employee'.³⁰ All black hunting practices were illegal and named 'poaching'. The fear of being accused of this practice held many black Africans from buying and selling game meat at local markets. An 'admission of guilt receipt' for the possession of wildlife meat shows why:

I, Piet Baloyi, labourer of the trust, was arrested by the police on the 1st of July [1961]. I had a little bit of meat in my pot, which I bought on June 26th from a man for 1/- (one shilling). The man said he killed a goat, otherwise I would not have taken it. I said that to the police, but as I saw that two men were so hit that their blood came out, I was so afraid that I paid a fine of R30.00. I am now a poor man, my children are starving.

Witness: Phimias Mopo

Signed: Piet Baloyi³¹

Dr. Amara, director of the veterinary department in Mozambique, showed interest in South Africa's anti-poaching successes. He informed the SA Hunters & Game Preservation Association about the 'slaughtering of game' in his country, and asked the association to suggest improvements for the Mozambican Game Laws. On behalf of the association, secretary Du Plessis provided suggestions, which can be categorized into three subsets, (1) regulations to ban the industrialization of wildlife meat and stimulate traditional agriculture, (2) regulations to install an ethical hunting code and (3) regulations restraining the 'native' population of access to wildlife. He wrote about Mozambique:

We have seen photos of lorry loads of dried meat. Nowhere else are professional white hunters, or for that matter any hunter, allowed to kill and sell game meat. It may be argued that the meat is required for food for natives employed in industries. In no other country is this allowed. If

²⁹ Transvaal Nature Conservation Ordinance 12 of 1983, p.69.

³⁰ Free State Ordinance no 8 of 1969, p.34.

³¹ SAPS Poaching files - Piet Baloyi Admission of guilt receipt, number 201025 1961 –National Archives of Pretoria

the hunting of game for meat was stopped, cattle farming in areas where it can profitably be conducted – and you have wonderful cattle country – would expand and experience boom conditions.³²

Dr. Amara took over most advice and implemented a license system for keeping dogs to exercise control on ‘native hunting’, a stricter control of arms licences ‘to natives’, a prohibition of snares and traps, and a total prohibition on the sale of game meat, either fresh or dry.

Back in South Africa however, things were changing as one social group was exempted from the banned sale of game biltong and game sausages. Landowners could obtain special licences to sell meat at local markets and thus make a profit from this natural resource.³³ Many scholars saw the 1950s as a defining time in which wildlife trade took off amongst landowners (Nell 2003). Biltong, plumage, trophies and leisurely hunts were by no means novel phenomena, although the commodification and marketization of these wildlife-related practices that transpired were unprecedented. A considerable number of farmers became convinced of wildlife’s economic potential, and a handful of them even made wildlife their main source of income. The industry enjoyed little to no official support by government organs at the time and those who were successful in wildlife undertakings were typically those who possessed large tracts of land. Wildlife was suited for wealthier farmers, who had ‘access to credit, capacity to bear risks, and access to inputs and information’ (Nell, 2003, p. 98). A person who was involved in wildlife utilization in the 1950s and who has played a significant role in the wildlife industry ever since is Harry Pemberton. South Africa knows many stories like his, and yet his stands out because of its distinct comprehensiveness.

My grandfather had been at the time of his death the single largest landowner in South Africa. He died in 1951 at the height of the wool boom and in the preceding 30 years or so acquired this arid Karoo vastness with some 50,000 sheep and heaven knows how many morgen.³⁴ In the course of its acquisition debts accumulated, with the boom, taxes, and at his death a not very large balance was left in his estate. Some farms were sold, and in a scrabble for more

³² Letter from the Hunters & Game Preservation Ass. Pretoria, to the veterinary Department of Mozambique, dated 14 March, 1960. Pretoria National Archives

³³ Natal Ordinance of Nature Conservation 19 of 1949, p.2214.

³⁴ A morgen was a unit of measurement of land in Germany, the Netherlands and the Dutch colonies, including South Africa and Taiwan. Until the advent of metrication in the 1970s, the morgen was the legal unit of measure of land in three of the four pre-1995 South African provinces - the Cape Province, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. In November 2007 the South African Law Society published the a conversion factor of 1Morgen = 0,856 532 Hectares to be used for the conversion of areas from imperial units to metric, particularly when preparing consolidated diagrams by compilation (‘Instructions for the Conversions of Areas to Metric’. Law Society of South Africa. 2007-11).

money dad, turned to one of the assets still untested, namely the springbok, which were scattered all over the farms. A contract was negotiated with a firm in Cape Town called Lewis & Simms for 700 carcasses. A hunting party was assembled of some 7 or eight shots including myself, then 15 years old. We set off for Sodium near Prieska and the farm Lammertjiespan, it was June and cold. Using a Mannlicher Schoenauer 8X56mm was no joke; it had a 200gr bullet and kicked like a mule. Sitting on my ass it would, on firing, sometimes bowl me over. I cannot remember my bag,³⁵ probably not more than two, as it had a trajectory like a waterfall and beyond say 150 meters was truly useless. In the afternoon all the buck were brought to the plaaswerf and sorted into bad, baddest, and no good, by today's standards, and off to Sodium to be loaded on the train. So much for refrigeration, health inspection, and all that we are now forced to go through. Back in the farm shed Mr. Brown made a hash of liver and kidneys –the best ever!

Those who owned a lot of land were encouraged by some to stock it with wildlife as it would ease the difficulty of managing such large farms. At a conference in Pretoria, a Mr. Van Vuren stated for instance:

If farmers would know that fields are more profit-yielding by stocking wild animals alongside farm animals; because they need less attention; because they need not to be dipped, fed, or looked after; because annually a percentage can be sold alive, for breeding purposes, or as meat carcasses; then there would be many landowners who would consider taking up wildlife in their farm business.³⁶

The idea was that only a relatively small investment was necessary to gain economic benefit from bucks. In retrospect, optimistic scholars and government officials (Such as Bothma, 2005; Nell, 2003; The National Agricultural Marketing Council, 2006) describe the adoption of wildlife utilisation by landowners as one of the great agricultural transformations in Africa's recent history, 'comparable to the adoption of maize and cattle' (Nell, 2003, p. 95). As wildlife was not physically bound to specific grounds, it was up until the nineties perceived riskful to become economically dependent on it, especially for those who were bound to smaller grounds. No-landers were unlikely to gain income from wildlife at all. The majority of farmers and government officials however remained convinced that wildlife and livestock competed for pastures and delivered an undesirable unison. There was especial fear for the spreading of

³⁵ 'Bag' stands for the amount of animals killed during a hunt.

³⁶ Address by JPJ van Vuren at the Conference on 'Recreation with Nature', Pretoria, July 1961, p.61.

wildlife diseases and predators (cf in Joubert, 1977: 183). An exception to this common belief of incommensurability came from the Natal Parks Board.

South Africa's fortified method of protecting wildlife on state ground,³⁷ involving fences, guards and arms, proved very successful in terms of stocking wildlife populations. Some environmental scientists, (generally non-South Africans like Tony Harthoorn and Raymond Dassman) criticized this form of wildlife management for being overly oriented towards economic rather than ecological criteria (Nell, 2003, p. 84), but the rising animal numbers substantiated the model's praiseworthiness for South Africans. In the parks of Kwazulu-Natal, which held relatively few predators, wildlife numbers increased so rapidly that recurrent oversupplies occurred. In 1956 authorities started to offer captured animals, initially free of charge, to (re)stock the lands of Natal farmers (P. S. Goodman, James, & Carlisle, 2002). Additionally, the Natal Parks Board hired biologists to provide landowners with necessary information and assistance for wildlife management (Patterson & Khosa, 2005, p. 9).

Scholes et al. argue that this led to an accelerated development of capturing and translocating techniques. The 'parastatal apparatus' had the financial possibilities to invest and develop technological advances, which in its turn proved to be crucial for the upcoming wildlife industry (Scholes, Grossman, & Barnes, 2009). The private sector soon started implementing and developing technical advances related to fencing, netting and the transporting of wildlife. A corresponding proliferation of jobs was created for professional capturers, translocation teams, hunters, skimmers and trackers. Mr Pemberton remembers it, above all, as an experimental time.

Tim had seen the cropping of Impala at night, admittedly using .22s and at very close ranges. Could this technique be used on other game? He induced de Beers to let him try, at I think Schmidtsdrift, and it worked! Other farmers did not think so, so try the Pemberton's, we went out one evening and within half an hour I had shot 10 buck, voila it works! Why? The introduction of quartz-halogen spotlights meant for rally cars had become available, and this technology, 500.000cp at first, later 1.000.000cp enabled night cropping to take place. This also changed our shooting gear, from relatively large calibres to .22 high velocity rounds such as the .222, later .223, and 22-250s also became popular. With night shooting head and neck shots were the rule. Telescopes also improved and 58mm objective lensed scopes improved night vision. My personal choice the Schmidt and Bender 8X 58. The quality of the venison improved

³⁷ As promulgated by eminent conservationists such as James Hamilton-Stevenson, Ian Player and Nick Steele

markedly as the absence of stress made a great difference. In addition the cool nights, and in mid winter downright Arctic, meant the absence of flies and the rapid cooling of the carcasses.

Meat quality and culling efficiency were now important markers for wildlife handling. In the same year that the Natal Parks Board started 'stocking' private land with wildlife, the Cape government acquired a farm on which they started conducting experiments to study the role and possibilities of wildlife on farms. An official who was involved in the project noticed the narrowing difference between farming wildlife and domesticated animals. He remarked that '[w]hen one discusses game with farmers, the following question is sooner or later asked: how many antelopes can be kept on a morgen of land?' (WK Kettlitz, "Game on Farms" in Nell, 2003).

International interest came in 1959, when Fulbright scholars from the United States were sent to Southern Africa to investigate the possibility of 'multiple species' ranching. Academics Dasmann, Mossman and Riney started to work on the Henderson farm in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), perhaps 'the first multiple species game ranch overseas' (Dasmann, 1962; Dasmann & Mossman, 1961; A. S. Mossman, 1975; S. L. Mossman & Mossman, 1976). Various scholars later defined their workings and thinking along the line of Aldo Leopold's 'school of thought' and particularly to his 1933 book, 'Game Management' (Carruthers, 2008, p. 166). Jane Carruthers notes that the Fulbright Scholars sought an approach which 'bridged the divide between wild and tame, in which game was conceptualised in a similar way as cattle, sheep or goats' (Carruthers, 2008, p. 166). Being trained as ecologists, their conception of human-nature relations was slightly different than mainstream agriculturalist thinking in South Africa however. The Fulbright scholars always had Leopold's adagium in mind, examining 'each question in terms of what is ethically and aesthetically right, as well as what is economically expedient' (Leopold, 1986). They accordingly employed a strong conservation orientation, noting explicitly that their mission was to save Africa's magnificent wild fauna (Dasmann, 1964: xi; Dasmann, 1959).



*Figure 3.1: Weighing Springbok
photo from Pemberton archives*

Bitter commentators were of the opinion that the ‘Henderson research’ by Dasmann and Mossman should not have been done by ‘expatriate scientists’ in the first place as they did not fully understand the local contexts. The authoritative South African veterinarian John Skinner evaluated the initial research by the Fulbright scholars as being overstated and leading to disappointing results (Skinner, 1971). According to the veterinarian, the initial data was inadequate, was performed by zoologists who ‘unlike experts in animal practice, did not have the required expertise in agricultural practice or animal husbandry’, and were biased in their approach because they

saw wildlife utilization mainly as a solution to ‘restore the dwindling herds of African wildlife’ (ibid. 15).

The Dasmann and Mossman ideas on the economic value of wildlife achieved an ‘almost paradigmatic status’ (Nell, 2003, p. 103) amongst landowners, and politicians, while their other ideas regarding ethical behaviour did not find an immediate audience. Mossman commented extensively on the possibilities of game farming for African communities for instance. ‘Multiple species ranching can help native peoples to preserve their culture, traditional spiritual areas, trees of religious importance and other features’, he wrote, ‘because such preservation is almost invariably compatible with game ranching. This is not true of other methods of land use’ (A. S. Mossman, 1975, p. 997). The Fulbright scholar was of the opinion that Africa should not convert its land drastically from traditional forms of pastoralism to commercial livestock production. Multiple species ranching, he believed, could ‘serve as a culturally gentle means for transition to a cash economy’ (ibid). In South Africa these ideas were not openly endorsed or reproduced. South African scholars and landowners were quick to pick up and elaborate on initial economically enticing findings. The University of Pretoria attempted to create research institutes, but lack of financial support by government was a major issue (Skinner, 1984b). Dasmann stressed the ‘fundamentally conservative’ mentality of South Africa’s government, and blamed them of impeding the game industry (Dasmann, 1962, p. 71). After private sponsoring was found, the Centre for Wildlife Management and the Mammal Research Institute (MRI) were created in 1965 (which complemented as well as competed with each other). Initial research by Centre director Petrides and Swank found that game was four times as productive as domestic stock, bred faster, suffered less from disease, needed less labour and range management and utilised the landscape more efficiently and thoroughly. This

was met with enthusiasm by some, but it was deemed overoptimistic by many (e.g. Petrides & Swank, 1960, 1966). Blesbok, eland, springbok and impala were ‘farmed’ by people such as Harry Pemberton and could well have great qualities, but prices stayed low. In 1961 dead springbok were sold for R4, while live animals fetched R12 (Riney & Kettlitz, 1964). Considering the time and money one had to invest in capturing the fugitive animals, it remained unappealing. This did not improve in the years to come. Even when farmers were having difficulties because of ‘low subsidies, the difficulties of obtaining farm labour, rural insecurity, the resurgence of some livestock diseases, constraints on exports and the high cost of fuel’ (Skinner, 1971), in 1966 duiker sold for R4–4.20, springbok for R6–10, blesbok for R8–14, impala for R7–16, blue wildebeest for R17–20 and kudu for R30–55 on the Pretoria public market (Steyn 1966 in Carruthers 2008).

In spite of low meat prices, wildlife operations increasingly carried an air of status in South Africa. Historian Dawn Nell shows that wildlife-related activities such as safaris and hunting ‘became the ultimate accoutrement for South Africa’s urban, professional elite’ (Nell, 2003, p. 106). New partakers engaged in the sector and soon stumbled over long-standing existing legislation regarding the conservation and keeping of wild animals.

Next problem, night shooting was illegal. Within our Roman Dutch legal system game were considered to be *res nullius*, effectively belonging to no-one. The fact that you constrain the game, shoot it, or make the effort to own it, makes it yours. Poaching could not be considered as theft, as there was no owner involved but was prosecutable because the poacher was trespassing, or had no licence, was taking the game by shooting from a public road, or was doing it at night, using a light etc. In other words, he was breaking one or other of the hunting regulations stipulated by the licensing authority.

A pallet of racial legislation was enforced to keep blacks from killing wildlife, but white poachers could not easily be stopped from taking animals from privately owned land. In a legal sense, those who killed wildlife became the owners of it. Living wildlife could not be owned, biltong was not to be sold, game meat sales were heavily regulated³⁸ and hunters were tied to all sorts of ‘ethical’ conservation legislation. They were obliged to hunt by daylight, not from a vehicle, with certain weapons, and in the correct season. Minutes from the Cape Government meetings on the new conservation ordinance of 1965 show that landowners perceived such rules to be either derisory, inadequately enforced, or deficient. In the Cape Province, where

³⁸ Cape Nature Conservation Ordinance 19 of 1949 on wildlife protection

ranching with springbok was particularly popular, government was pressurized by new founded 'conservation groups' to re-think their original policies.

One of the most vital steps regarding wildlife production on private land was taken on the 9th of September 1965, when the provincial government accepted the second draft of the Cape Conservation Ordinance. It is insightful to examine the gathering closely. The MEC for Conservation, Mr. Heunis, opened the session with a strong but somewhat gainsaying speech. He mentions the adverse effects of private development, in which 'more and more land is brought under the plough or developed as pastures, and less remains for the preservation of our wildlife'.³⁹ He continued his speech by telling the audience that 'I believe that those farmers who have fenced their land and created circumstances for wildlife to breed by doing this, are the greatest conservationists of our wildlife'.⁴⁰ After a detailed discussion of the ordinance with Cape Nature Director Dr. Hay and Mr. Steele,⁴¹ a discussion started on the merits of privatized wildlife, which for insight in the general process and atmosphere will be partially and selectively quoted below. All quotes stem from the same set of meetings, discussing the implementation of the new bill, but have been re-arranged to represent the weightiest opinions (as in Snijders, 2006).

MEC Theunis: The changes that are being made give the land owner complete power over wildlife on his farm once he obtains a certificate from the council to maintain that his farm is adequately enclosed so that nothing can escape from it.

Mr. Thomson: Who will control this? Who will walk all-around the fencing of a 'n 6,000 morge farm?

Mr. Heunis: We are not going to define what form the inspection should take, but it is a safeguard. It can be done by air perhaps...

Dr. Domisse: We momentarily have thirteen conservation officers officially in the whole Cape Province. No wonder I have never seen one. They must be as rare as the rarest of flora and fauna that we are trying to protect!

Mr. Jooste: People of the Cape ought to be very thankful to landowners and the farm community. I for one am happy to once more acknowledge provisions and certain privileges they should have.

³⁹ Cape Government 9 sept 1965 tweede lesing konseppordonnansie op natuurbewaring p211

⁴⁰ Ibid. Translated from Afrikaans by author: 'Ek glo dat die grootste bewaarders van ons wild juis hierdie boere is wat hulle plase omhein het en die omstandighede geskep het vir wild om daar aan te teel'.

⁴¹ Kobus Jooste, senior member at Cape Nature Conservation and imminent director recalls that the person who crafted the initial legislation was in all probability Mr. Gert van Wyk, 'in the time while Dr. Douglas Hey was still the Director of Conservation'.

- Mr. Dorfling: When you deal with people that are enthusiastic about nature, you can't let the springbucks eat all their crops – they should be accommodated [...] Poachers [ed. both white and non-white] are the real problem here though, we need to enforce laws that are stricter than this ordinance to control them.
- A member: Hang them!
- Mr. Dorfling: Surely by their feet, right?
- Dr. Domisse: Well, I don't like quoting the Transvaal, as you know very well Sir, it is a part of the country I do not like very much, but I am quoting it as I think it may help us. According to Section 11 of ord 23 of 1949 in The Transvaal an administrator may declare any area defined in the proclamation to be a game reserve. Now, we don't want this, but if a farmer is earnest about creating a nature reserve, the administrator should have the power to classify his land as such. [...] It would help if we indicated the main gate of his farm as a nature reserve, if we raise higher penalties for offenders and trespassers, and perhaps recognize the owner as an honorary nature conservation officer.
- [interjections] Hear, hear!
- Dr Domisse An emblem at the gate of a farmer may well be the envy of other farmers and will so spread. Private conservation will rise and our wildlife will be protected.
- Mr. Theunis: I am prepared to accept your plea about a 'third category' of private nature reserves, besides local authority and provincial grounds, but I advise you to elaborate on it and resubmit the proposal next year or so.
- Mr. Thomson: After the farm is enclosed, the farmer will feel pride and ownership. They will control their land and prevent the shooting of bucks [...] If we speak of our fatherland, we feel proud about it. When you conserve that which belongs to your fatherland, you will form an even greater love and pride for your fatherland.
- Dr Wolheim: If I may be critical, it appears now that the only persons who are ever going to be able to get a hold of any kind of game biltong are those who have pals in the Karoo with Springbok on their farms. There is no other way of getting it! This is unfair discrimination against us who are city slickers and have no pals – there does not seem to be any way to buy Game Biltong. This however, is a minor point and for the sake of the preservation of the game I will be prepared to do without my biltong.
- Mr. Lobser: And what about the small farmers? They will have to protect wildlife with new rules at cost of their families. Wildlife causes damages, compensate them for their problems please!
- Dr Wolheim: Taking one springbok or protea will now be illegal for those who do not have land, while mismanaging a whole farm and burning it for management is not... I want to pick my own flowers and bring them to Sea Point without having a transportation permit from the state and written permission by the landowner.

Mr. Vorster: We should not tax landowners too much; we should make it easy for them. We don't want them to write out up a pack of letters, each time someone drops by or comes to hunt.

Chairman: Motion put and agreed too.⁴²

The outcome of the sessions was that landowners were to be accommodated by a fencing model. By completely fencing off one's land with -depending on various provincial legislation and held species- 2.40 meter high wired fencing, one would show his intention to control wildlife on one's land and receives a Certificate of Adequate Enclosure (CAE). Legally speaking, as these CAE's fell under provincial legislation and only concerned Nature Conservation guide-lines, not much had changed. If a third party were to lure away animals from adequately enclosed land or even if such party were to seize animals on privately owned land, it would be impossible for the landowner to claim ownership over the species in court. Trespassing would be the only legal measure to accuse the 'poacher' (Rabie & van de Merwe, 1990). CAEs did significantly empower landowners by bestowing them with the right to a) capture and keep most species without having to apply for separate permits, b) to hunt at any time of the year, c) to market, sell or donate animal commodities at will, and d) to be physically as well as legally protected against poachers and trespassers.

The CAE-system was soon effected in other provinces to exempt landowners from a good deal of conservation legislation.⁴³ The 'written permission' from the landowner also became widely enforced and strengthened the position of landowners in the following sense: only the landowner (and sometimes also relatives and white employees) were to hunt without special permissions and could utilize exclusive weapons such as: 'small calibres, weapons that discharge more than two shots, shotgun, bow and arrow, trap-cage, snare, gin, net, bird-lime, pitfall, holding pen or any like medium, contrivance or method'.⁴⁴ Such legislation implicitly strengthened the farmer's inherent command over land, and simultaneously weakened the position of non-whites in relation to land ownership and wildlife utilization. While public-private partnership grew through conservation narratives and ideas of patriotism, the environment remained ill-monitored and became more exclusive to those who had no land. The conservation department's willingness to be forthcoming in terms of exemptions came as a welcome surprise to landowners.

⁴² Translations from Afrikaans by author: the session was bilingual in English and Afrikaans and recorded without translations.

⁴³ Cape 1967; 1974; Transvaal 1984

⁴⁴ Ordinance Free State no 8 of 1969, p37

The role played by Dr Douglas Hay, the then director of Nature Conservation in the Cape Province, was probably pivotal in making 'ownership' possible. It is difficult to speculate, but did he anticipate the ultimate consequence of his decisions, the game industry and its ramifications? If so, then surely he should be recognised as the father to it. His concept was taken up by all the provinces, usually with some changes, but basically it provided the same dispensation. Ownership. The growth and development of our industry was the consequence.

It is difficult also to speculate if Dr Hay anticipated the blurring of boundaries between wild animals and farm animals as a consequence of these Certificates for Adequate Enclosure. Now that landowners were exempted from most conservation laws, doors of wildlife husbandry, intensification, domestication, commodification and marketization were opened. Two very different perspectives on wildlife, conservation and agriculture, were conjured discordantly. This translated into triangular institutional pressure between wildlife producers, the Department of Nature Conservation and the Department of Agriculture. In 1971 Skinner mentioned that, 'ostriches in the little Karoo, Moroccan guinea fowl, quails and crocodiles are not from South Africa and are no longer classified as wildlife' (Skinner, 1971). They were considered for agricultural purposes, despite of their formal classification as non-domesticated. A lobby was formed to have wildlife production moved institutionally to the Department of Agriculture. The department was at the time bombarded with complaints and subsidy requests by disgruntled drought-stricken landowners. They saw some potential of utilizing 'efficient' wildlife in times of drought and, in 1960, invited farmers to set aside 'odd plots of land on every farm which for some reason or other do not fit in well with the farming pattern' for wildlife preservation and production (Nell, 2003, p. 60). The Department of Nature Conservation reacted very pleased about this new agricultural commitment to ecology. In due time the situation led to a noteworthy confusion of jurisdiction, one which is still entangled today. Especially as the trade in wildlife meat rooted throughout South Africa.

During 1972 Bernie Kempen, our attorney and local mayor, had an idea to enlarge the town abattoir and in the process was negotiating with an English butcher and slaughterman (a qualified abattoir technician), Steve Basford. The local farmers offered no support, so we employed him. We upgraded the abattoir and added an extensive range of products to our butchery sales list. We shot Springbok and they were marketed as a 'Bok-in-'n -box', and with

an established market of individuals and caterers we did a brisk trade. Our market spread was from Cape Town to Pretoria, abetted by the relatively cheap transport.

The Department of Agriculture permitted abattoirs to slaughter wildlife, and it was not long before these ‘bucks in boxes’ reached the Cape Town docks. The company Afrexco for instance made contact with Swiss buyers and attempted to set up wildlife meat export. Regulations once more stood in the way, this time from the agricultural department who requested similar veterinarian rules for wildlife as for normal stock. Because of wildlife’s wildness however, it was more difficult to meet standards relating to transport, time between kill and refrigeration, and disease control. Mr. Pemberton remembers that the most astonishing was ‘the prohibition of the use of crude language in the presence of the dead animals... and the wearing of clean underclothing’. Despite of apartheid boycotts on trade, three stable trading partners were eventually found: Germany, Austria and Switzerland (Interview D.Roux, 2009). Trades worked strictly through bilateral agreements and were limited to few antelope species. The current largest exporter of game meat, Mr Neethling of Camdeboo Processors in the Eastern Cape, states that only ‘when the UN started harmonizing, from 1996-1996, could we start exporting everything. And when I say everything, I mean all antelope and zebra’ (Interview D.Roux, 2009).

Organized Ranching

In 1974, Vleissentraal, which has since then been led by Willy Roux, held its first game auction in Hoedspruit. When the Transvaal Nature Conservation Department found out about the auction, it tried to prevent it on religious grounds. Journalist Jan van der Walt recalls them to have commanded: ‘you can’t sell what belongs to the Lord’ (Van der Walt, 2009). Nonetheless, Roux held the auction and game farmers from the Northern regions of South Africa united. Not much later, Mr. Roux and some others gathered together to address the resistance between game ranchers and government. A meeting on Dr. Myburgh’s farm Tshwarelano in 1976 marked the establishment of the Transvaal Game Association. Similar associations were created in the other provinces (e.g. the Eastern Cape Game Management Association, Northern Cape Game Farm Owners Association and the Natal Game Management Association). The movements were related to national farming unions TAU and SAAU (now AgriSA) and with them, a national nature conservation conference was held at Buffelspoort. There, Mr. Pemberton called for a National platform for game ranchers (Van der Walt, 2009) and hence

the first national organization, the National Game Farming Commodity Committee, was born on the 23rd of September 1981.⁴⁵ Mr. Pemberton recalls:

It was a body in which the various provincial bodies were represented and not individual members. Its role was to address the problems of National importance, mainly with central Government departments. As National Chairman I was elected and served for the next 17 years, more importantly it now involved Jan van der Walt who within the SAAU provided the secretariat and management. I could not at the outset think that Jan would be such an important player [...] The question of 'ownership' was always at the forefront. The Transvaal Association was always of the opinion that game should be regarded as farm animals with all the aspects of their ownership.

Its management was afforded to the personnel of the national meat committee and for the next 15 years Harry Pemberton acted as the chair. At the very first meeting subjects came to the fore that would remain discussion points for many years to come. Wherever possible, the goal was to evaluate and eliminate unnecessary restrictions on the ownership, catching, transportation and disposal of wildlife species. A serious appeal would be made to any nature conservation authorities that considered introducing new control measures for multiple species ranching. The Department of Agriculture mentioned 'ongoing problems' in answering game ranchers requests as it shared authority with National and Provincial Conservation bodies. In a position paper for instance, agricultural officer Grossman is openly concerned about the relationships between government departments with regards to game farming and expresses frustration about staff shortages at conservation (Grossman, 1988, p. 33). A Mr. Van der Dussen of Environmental Affairs affirms this, saying it is 'foolish to think that we can afford the luxury of internecine fighting. A house should not be divided against itself' (Van der Dussen, 1984, p. 21). In 1982, the Eastern Cape Union set up a meeting with nature conservation for this reason, stating that 'nature conservation in South Africa is in the ridiculous position of being in the hands of no fewer than seven governmental institutions', meaning the nature conservation



Figure 3.2: Wildlife cooking demonstration. Photo from Pemberton archives.

⁴⁵ The name would later change to South African Game Ranching Organization and eventually Wildlife Ranching South Africa in 2005.

departments of four provinces, the National Parks Board, the Department of Forestry, and the SADF. ECGMA's requested uniform policy adaption implemented by a central national conservation board. By means of power play, it threatened to move to agriculture completely if the demands were not met.

As early as 1974, the Department of Agriculture had set up a Directorate Committee for Game Farming, which published an influential report in 1980. The group established that 399 properties, covering 610,757 ha of ground were devoted solely to wildlife. Many more had chosen for a mixed model with livestock and game. The Department officially accepted that the bona fide game farmer ought to have the same prerogatives as stock farmers with regards to farm planning and subsidies. Furthermore, the Veterinary Services would investigate the possibility of legally shifting 'game' to 'animals' in terms of the act on meat hygiene to facilitate intensive wildlife farming (Baard, 1984). A wildlife chair was created at Onderstepoort, taken by Professor Metzger, and an 'Officer for Game Farming' was appointed at the department, held by Mr. Grossman. The Department was of the opinion that drought aid should also be provided to game farmers, although they were to realize 'that because of the relatively small contribution to the national income, the industry cannot lay claim to the highest priorities' (Baard, 1984, p. 17). On a provincial level however, the state worked together with game farmers which led to the founding of the first conservancies in Natal (Wels, 2003, p. 151). This 'voluntary, co-operative management of an area'⁴⁶ implied that groups of farmers could legally lower their fences to conserve wildlife and, more importantly, try and stop poaching activities on their combined properties. Wels shows that farmers were very aware of the different stakes that were at play for themselves and the state. Conservancies, according to one author he quotes, would bring farmers the advantage of 'reduced poaching, stock theft, arson, trespassing, vandalism, and theft of crops, timber and fencing' while also protecting flora and fauna 'and that's what's "in it" for conservation authorities' (Gosling 1984, p. 23, in Wels, 2003, p. 151).

Africans were at this time not seen as stakeholders, but as either a hinder to the wildlife industry, or as cheap labour force. Infuriated by the appalling working conditions on farms, one ANC Radio Freedom broadcast reads:

Our people employed by these farmers go to the fields under the shadow of the whip and the gun. They work under slave conditions for slave wages. In these areas, our people are forced to work

⁴⁶ Natal Park Boards (1993) Guide lines for the formation of a conservancy, Pietermaritzburg, p. 1.

between 10 and 12 hours a day with very little or no break at all. They work 52 weeks a year and take 16 days off. Child labour is rife. Our young ones are picked up in open lorries and transported daily to the fields or they are taken out of school so that the labour needs of these racist farmers can be met at the least cost to them. To these brutal oppressors, the future and education of our children is far less important than the profits they reap from our expertise. These children and women, so-called casual workers, are repaid in tomatoes, cabbages, or as little as 80 cents or one rand each. This white farmer community exploits with a slave-owner mentality. They treat their chickens and cows, their tractors and trucks with greater respect than they treat black farm workers.⁴⁷

As the industry expanded and more and more wildlife meat was produced, new markets were explored and also African consumers were targeted. According to dr. Steenkamp the rise of black person's income in the 1980s was likely to go paired with low-priced meat consumption and therefore 'marketing [of game meat] amongst black consumers should be strongly backed by advertising and promotion campaigns'.⁴⁸ Marketing targeted another specific social group, namely the white South African housewife. A presumption by the wildlife industry was that housewives did not know how to cook wildlife and found its taste inferior to common meat. One slogan therefore read: 'the discovery of a new game dish does more for human happiness than the discovery of a new star'. Mr. Pemberton's wife published wildlife recipes and gave cooking demonstrations throughout the country (see figure 3.2).

The most important marketing was directed at tourists. The slogan of PHASA, the professional hunting association became 'South Africa was always, before the discovery of gold, the country of game'. The President of the Professional Hunting body pitched 'our game is renewable and in the long term could well bring us more in terms of money than our gold which in the end must run out'. He continued: 'the first genuine tourists to SA were hunters; they will also be the last tourists'.⁴⁹ When East African nations banned hunting in the early eighties, South African outfitters succeeded in promoting their country as the principal place in the world to hunt African species. Even when politico-economic boycotts were forced upon South Africa, hunters did flock to the country to hunt the Big Five. Landowners recognized their unique position in the world and understood also that their industry was not all about farming. At a conference in Kimberly, Dr Lucas Potgieter pushed the idea of a game farmer who 'markets something more than an agricultural product. He sells holidays, relaxation,

⁴⁷ ANC Radio Freedom, Addis Ababa, October 24 1986

⁴⁸ Steenkamp (1988) *Report of the 4th National Game Committee Congress 1988*, p. 31

⁴⁹ Lindsay, Donald (1988) Opening Address. *Report of the 4th National Game Committee Congress 1988*

nature, camp fires, the dream of a dark Africa, a hide-out away from the city noise' (ibid). The challenge for the industry was to align this image of game farms as an African place without people with the existing increasingly high rural demographics and busy spatial configurations. One way to do so was by including conservation ideas in the business model of trading and killing wild animals and looking for alignment with officials on this point. As Prime Minister PW Botha told an audience of game ranchers, 'I believe the public perception that hunting and conservation are irreconcilable, should be stamped out completely'.⁵⁰

Wildlife Ownership

Landowners, supported by the National Game Organization, remained particularly dismayed with government however, because authorities actively prevented production and trade in wildlife, whilst financial institutions such as the Land Bank did not recognize wildlife as economic assets. Because wildlife was - in a legal sense - uncontrollable, it constituted a risk in the eyes of financial executives and agricultural officials, who consequently did not provide game farmers with subsidies, loans or reliefs.⁵¹ The National Game Organization repeatedly asked the Minister of Justice to investigate the possibility of wildlife ownership and eventually, in May 1988, the request was tabled in Parliament.⁵² Talks accelerated after the Prime Minister of the Republic, Mr. PW Botha, accepted a personal invitation to open the National Game Conference in 1989. His speech was prepared by the NGO's secretary and centred on South African's culture of hunting. The president mentioned the 'voortrekkers who needed wildlife to conquer South Africa's inlands. He focused on the average South African hunter who took out his gun twice a year to connect with nature and uttered, 'modestly, I am one of them'. Botha furthermore recognized game farmer's problems concerning the legal protection of game and instructs the earlier mentioned Law Commission to work on these problems.⁵³

We are aware that game farms do not enjoy the same rights as stock farms. Punishment for poaching and damages are experienced as being inadequate. That is why the government has decided to urgently reconsider the position of game farmers concerning theft and so on. The

⁵⁰ Botha, Report of the 4th national congress 1988 Original: 'Ek glo die openbare persepsie dat jag en bewaring onversoensbaar is, moet die nek ingeslaan word'.

⁵¹ What may have added to the frustrations is that in neighbouring Zimbabwe, government had passed the Parks and Wildlife Act in 1975 that determined all wildlife on private land to be property of the landowner.

⁵² Volksraad 11 Mei 1988 9920

⁵³ Annual report SAGRO 1989/1990; South African Law Commission, 1990

South African Law Commission will consider this matter and will give a legal opinion to government. I thus expect positive results in the near future.

The Law Commission gathered shortly after the conference and focused on the question whether wildlife could be accommodated by agricultural legislation such as the Stock Theft Act. One of the main hurdles was that, as far as could be traced, no specific legal definition of wildlife existed (South African Law Commission, 1990). No South African court had ever been asked to decide if an animal was either wild or domesticated. In an attempt to set the required categorical boundaries, the Law Commission faced serious concerns. If the definition of wildlife would be set too broad, the system would create ownership and protection of species that were 'superfluous', even bothersome to landowners. Farmers, so was the reasoning, would merely be frustrated by legal conflicts regarding meerkats, moles, skunks, lynxes or insects (notes to the SA Law Commission Report, 1990). The commission did not know how to tackle this issue adequately and opted for a new Act that would rule over all utilizable wild animals by categorizing them as 'game'.

What resulted throughout the discussions was a remarkable re-interpretation of 17th century common law on animal ownership. Wildlife had always been classified as *res nullius*, things that belonged to nobody, of which ownership was only possible through *occupatio*, or physical control. Because of their fugitive nature, physical control meant killing wildlife; wounding an animal or owning the land on which it moved did not provide sufficient conditions (Rabie & van de Merwe, 1990). This effectually meant that wildlife could be taken by anyone, disregarding the fact on whose land it was found. With prices of wildlife on the rise (because of increased (trophy) hunting, tourism and venison production), landowners, echoed by the Law Commission, perceived this lack of financial assistance and wildlife entitlement as discriminatory. The challenge was thus to reconstruct the concept of *occupatio* to include landowner's rights to own wildlife. This was done by fortifying provincial policies to official legal standings and by arguing that enclosing, rather than killing, an animal was an adequate measure to show one's intention to physically control it (notes to the SA Law Commission Report, 1990). Now, one's intention to physically control wildlife was explicated by the erection of 2.4 meter high game fences.

In the phase of public commenting, a Kwazulu Natal game farmer critically noted that the consequences of the legislation would 'be divisive'. The respondent warned that the Act would turn individual landowners into wealthy game owners overnight and that it would in all probability lead to 'the erection of game fences across major sections of the entire country'

(Public Comments to Game Theft Act Draft, 1990). This line of reasoning was not repeated in parliamentary debates and the Game Theft Act was unanimously accepted and enacted as Act No.105 of 1991.⁵⁴ The bearer of a Certificate of Adequate Enclosure (CAE) was from now on the official owner of wildlife on his property and was exempted from many conservation laws.⁵⁵ The new rulings bestowed landowners with the right to a) capture and keep most species without having to apply for separate permits, b) to hunt at any time of the year and c) to market, sell or donate animal commodities at will. Hereby, the legislation implicitly tightened the land owner's command over his entitlements and weakened the position of no-landers and farm dwellers who found themselves ever more restricted from access to wildlife and land. Those who lived from wild animals and did not own land faced strict new poaching regulations. Their actions were now classified to be unlawful.

Looking forward

At the time game fences became official requirements not all hunters were content with the new powerful position it gave landowners. The rise of the industry had considerably driven up prices of various game species. Amateur hunters could not always afford to hunt anymore. The confederation of amateur hunters, CHASA, held many meetings about this issue. In 1989 (in the first meeting that was attended by a female), it was decided to take up the issue with the minister of environmental affairs. CHASA found that game had become so exclusive and expensive, that the State should offer hunting grounds to non-professional hunters.⁵⁶ 'Years ago, hunting was different' said Lucas Potgieter. 'If you wanted to harvest some biltong, you would call the game farmer or simply drop by. You would bring a case of whisky, some wire, clothing, and dependent if he was a Nat or a Sap, a picture of dr. Malan or general Smuts and then he would allow you on his farm to shoot a kudu and two impalas.'⁵⁷ These hunting sentiments were important to local hunters, uttered CHASA president De Villiers. 'There was always some relative or friend to invite you over and tell you out straight "man, let's shoot you a buck"'. This phrase has practically disappeared from our language'.⁵⁸ The local hunting plea

⁵⁴ Hansard 1991: 11433

⁵⁵ The CAE system was already enforced in the Cape Province in the 1970s to relieve landowners from conservation measures; it was not enforced nationally though and did not provide one with ownership rights.

⁵⁶ CHASA: 1981 - 2006 - 'n Oorsig

⁵⁷ Potgieter, L. (1988) Etiek, *Report of the 4th National Game Committee Congress 1988*

⁵⁸ Johan de Villiers, president of CHASA in his opening speech - P16

to the serious game ranchers was clear: 'don't quote dollar prices to boertjies with a surname such as Potgieter. You sound like a terrible snob'.⁵⁹

By now, the political landscape of South Africa was changing rapidly. P.W. Botha was replaced by Mr. De Klerk, negotiations with the ANC had commenced, and Mandela was released from prison. The game industry was preparing for an uncertain future, in myriad ways. Some people were low-spirited. A Dr. Sutner was sure the next decade would strip virtually all farms from its trees, especially those close to public roads and black residential areas. With 'a few million hungry people [that] will live on the borders of the Kruger National Park, what will we hunt if this comes to pass?' he asked. 'Even the entire army will not be able to save this heritage from total destruction'. Some expressed extreme fear for the future of the country, by predicting that hordes of poor people would squat on game farms.⁶⁰ Others, such as Robert Maine saw the political transformation in a very different light. At a national address the ECGMA chairman acknowledged that recreational facilities in South Africa were indeed only designed for approximately four million people and would have to deal with the approximately ten million people streaming onto the market. Game ranchers, especially those who had already developed to host tourists, he thought, would encounter unique opportunities for expansion. SATOUR, the official Tourism body, had similar hopes and established a strategy to promote the rural environment as a tourism product. Ten regional forums were organized in which agriculture with an emphasis on game was presented as the defining enabler for rural tourism. A third view was presented by Dr. Ferrar, who gave away a strong warning to the industry.

The industry had better look to its reputation as a fair, consistent and responsible employer. The industry needs to be wary of activities that give it the reputation of being a simply a form of rural investment, a hedge against inflation for wealthy city dwellers with a tax problem. If not, it will set itself up for potential nationalisation. Ecological arguments of soil recovery ... are not likely to wash under a new democratic administration (Ferrar 1990:117).

Abridgement

This chapter shows that wildlife has always been capitalized upon in South Africa by a rural gentry and a political class who both – and often together - aimed to gain control over these natural resources by restricting access of others. An important way of doing this has always

⁵⁹ Potgieter, L. (1988) Etiek, *Report of the 4th National Game Committee Congress 1988* P. 27

⁶⁰ NGO Conference Report 1992, p98.

been the linking of economic institutionalization of wildlife to the creation of ‘fluid’ policy categories. From the moment the VOC arrived in the Cape, wildlife became the relentless subject of classification and reclassification; those animals that were burdensome to landowners were classified as dangerous, a nuisance or ‘vermin’ and could thereby be shot, while species that were popular to the well-heeled were classified to be protected. When rules were not followed and laws could not be enforced, the company and later colony created economic machinery such as taxes, hunting licences, bounties and transportation tariffs for economic gain. An important alliance this chapter uncovers and which this thesis will build on in the following chapters is the alliance between landowners and (conservation) officials that, as we have seen, dates back to the early days of conservation. Landowners have backed conservation plans to reserve nature, while conservation officers have exempted landowners from taxes in return for their support. The 1886 game laws, which aimed to protect wildlife and land by limiting the interaction between people and wildlife, provides us with an historical example. Landowners who backed this set of laws received liberties such as the right to hunt any animal on their private land without permits, the right to cultivate, sell and donate animals on their land without licences, and the extension of hunting rights throughout the year as well as to family members. By arguing that Africans were primitives who did not understand natural resource management and game conservation, landowners and the state could gradually seize control over land, water, flora and fauna. Specific practices by which Africans utilized wildlife, such as by trapping or snaring, were considered to violate conservation principles and were heavily punished. As Africans were not to carry firearms, validated forms of wildlife consumption were equally barred. Wildlife, as defined by the state, was thus devised in such a manner as to withhold Africans from consuming or even interacting with it. Such policy led to displacement, economic injustices and an increasing detachment between Africans and wildlife. As wildlife became more exclusive a similar form of detachment barred white South Africans with little economic or social capital from utilizing wildlife also.

The Game Theft Act, which was passed in 1991 just before the end of Apartheid, is now the main law that deals with wildlife ownership (and theft). The last part of this chapter describes the debate that built up to the enforcement of this legislation that, I argue, has fortified many of the described dynamics. In its reformulation of ‘wildlife’ as an ownable good the act has facilitated the privatization of a vast amount of land and natural resources by making it possible for ‘wild property’ to be absorbed into financial markets. This new property administration is implemented by means of fencing regulations (see chapter V), and the combination of these institutions shows how wildlife ownership is firmly interlocked with land

ownership. It implicitly strengthened existing farmer's command over land, and simultaneously weakened the position of others in relation to land ownership and wildlife utilization.

In the following two chapters I will focus on the social consequences of such institutions and examine the advancement of the wildlife industry up until today. From 1994 onwards South Africa changed completely and I will study the re-orientational process that many landowners went through to in the context of new societal goals such as conservation, employment equity, land reform and rural development. With the findings of this chapter in mind I will illustrate the path-dependency that South Africa's human-wildlife legacy has brought about.



No understanding of local hunting is possible without some reference to the state's institutions and their power over the lives of ordinary citizens.

Stuart Marks, 1991

Chapter IV ‘n Boer maak ‘n Plan

When straightforward answers are not at hand, or morale is low, many South Africans invoke the Afrikaans expression *‘n boer maak ‘n plan* [a farmer makes a plan]. From the 1980s onwards, as white supremacy started to quiver and wither, commercial farmers certainly needed to make new plans. The socio-economic and political system that privileged white South Africans and particularly landowners and farmers, as described in the previous chapter, came to crumble. Landowners found themselves confronted with societal developments that challenged their own position within the agricultural sector - a loss of primary production, a decline of agricultural subsidies, and policies that aimed at the redistribution of land, wealth and labour. One of the strategies farmers chose for, this chapter argues, is ‘biodiversification’, in which landowners diversified their production lines to either include new bio-entities or reconfigure existing bio-entities for production purposes. The stocking of wildlife on private land as well as the marketization of supplied species is an example of this. The consequences of these wildlife conversions were hitherto unseen landscape reforms - spatial shifts that continue to involve the acquisition and consolidation of land, the erection of material boundaries such as game fences, the rewilding of terrain and the displacement of people.

In examining this re-orientational process, this chapter (and the following) peel at various societal layers that induced these conversions. As a whole, this chapter functions as a bridge linking past to present wildlife narratives. The case I make is that the privatization of wildlife provided a manner to legitimize and safeguard land, wealth and status in the new Republic of South Africa. The narratives in the chapters emanate mainly from interviews with South African landowners. Most come from the Cacadu district in the Eastern Cape and have chosen to make a living from wildlife on their land.⁶¹ All are white men, generally wealthy and educated descendants of an agricultural and trading class.⁶² These landowners are the agents in this chapter, who, as South Africa continues to transform, are confronted with various new societal structures and new layers of reality, which they must side or part with. By means of semi-structured interviews I asked my respondents why, when and how they shifted to wildlife production to find out what forces drive South Africa’s wildlife industry. On questioning motivations to convert, most respondents did not give complicated answers about societal restructuring or the repositioning of landowners. They merely said it was for the money. Two examples:

⁶¹ See methodology chapter for more information on respondent selection.

⁶² Cf. typification by Hart, 2002:64

It's quite simple. Its economic and one of the best economic farming methods of livestock in South Africa. A lot of South Africa's agricultural land is not suitable for any other agricultural practices. It's a lot of mountainous area, arid areas, rainfall is low...all that....which makes it a lot more profitable to farm with game (Interview R.Venter, 2010).

It's definitely for the money. If you take a 1000 hectare game farm with nothing fancy on it and a proper manager, it's going to cost you 30,000 to 50,000 Rands a month. That is not money from the back pocket. You're going to be a good business man and you can make a fortune (Interview A.Pretorius, 2008).

Such answers demonstrate that WBLU has increasingly become accepted amongst landowners and is now perceived as a profitable business model. A number of practicing game farmers however, gave counter-narratives. Their answers ranged from implications that their own wildlife operations did not lead to profits to statements implying that large parts of the industry are unprofitable. A Uytenhage farmer for instance told me he has been running his game farm at a loss since 2005, saying 'I have a fully fenced registered game farm with buffaloes and all that, but I don't make any money' (Interview F.Roelofs, 2010). An experienced farm manager told me he is convinced the game reserve he manages for a Spanish business man doesn't make a profit and never will (Interview D.Marais, 2012). A provincial official with a 25 year track record in wildlife farm inspections stated that only the biggest farms which are supported by international funders survive in the long term (Interview J.Grobler, 2009). The economic blueprint of two further wildlife farms I visited placed hobby and personal leisure above profit. Obviously, each sector has companies that run at a profit and those that run at a loss. Yet, in light of continuous and abundant game conversion rates, these opposing statements about financial viability ask for an exploration of further motivations to convert land.

When probing beyond the economic sphere of wildlife conversions, many alternative reasons came to the fore. To a degree, answers were in line with recent studies that observed the industry's growth (Carruthers, 2008; Cousins, Sadler, & Evans, 2008; Cousins et al., 2010; Smith & Wilson, 2002). Historian Jane Carruthers sums up motivations saying that wildlife conversions have 'been predicated on the need to reduce farm labour, the prevalence of farm murders and security issues generally as well as the threat of land restitution claims and expropriation' (Carruthers, 2008, p. 161). Lorena Pasquini surveyed fifty landowners in the Little Karoo who, unlike my respondents, gave conservation motivations the highest score as

a reason for establishing their reserves, 'ahead of financial or other reasons' (Pasquini, 2007; Pasquini, Twyman, & Wainwright, 2010, p. 664).

In this chapter I will build on this list by sectionalizing farmer's narratives to 1) an economic layer that deals with the structural reform of agriculture in South Africa's transition from a closed nationalist to an 'open' free market, 2) rural safety and security narratives, 3) government targets to redistribute land, and 4) changing ideas about workers and labour reform. The land reform layer will be dissected in particular as game farms have an interesting, largely unexplored role in it. I wish to make the argument that conservation policy has been off the radar of land scholars for too long, whereas it should have a prominent place in the debate. Indeed, conservation policy and related land reform has different premises, but it has in common that it also aims to alter the ownership status of large swaths of land in South Africa and is effectively doing so. Thereby, it has consequences for the land debate, is at times at conflict with it and alignment should be sought after. I will thus pose the question how game farms affect land reform and how they are themselves affected by its mechanisms.

To contextualize and unravel the particular layers however, I will start out by introducing a man who served as the Minister of Agriculture and Land Affairs in the last Apartheid Cabinet as well as in the ANC's first. I will end with a paragraph on the social consequences of land conversions to WBLU in light of the full pallet of motivations farmers have.

The Deregulation of South African agriculture

Van Niekerk was in his office packing his belongings when I first spoke to him in February 2009. Three day before we met, the man who goes by the nickname 'Kraai' had formally left the Parliament he served for twenty-three years. 'Nothing ever stays the same' he had said in his farewell speech, 'what is now, will pass too [...] Bound to each other by fate as citizens of South Africa, we are dependent on each other to make the future a success'.⁶³ Our conversation started out with South Africa's 1994 political transformation. Mr van Niekerk pointed at two remaining photographs on his wall. The first was de Klerk's National party cabinet and consisted solely of aged white men in dark suits. The second photo had men and women of all shades standing around the colourful figure of Nelson Mandela. 'This is transformation for

⁶³ Unrevised Hansard National Assembly, Friday, 13 February 2009, Take: 80 Proceedings of the National Assembly. Original: Niks bly ooit dieselfde nie. Wat nou is, gaan ook verby. Iets anders kom, en dit gaan ook verby. Die toekoms lê voor. Lotsgebonde is ons as burgers van Suid-Afrika aan mekaar toegewys om 'n sukses daarvan te maak

you', he said and explained that the pictures were taken on the same day in May 1994. In the few hours between these picture moments, Mr Mandela had been installed as the first prime minister of the new South Africa. His inaugural address on May 10, 1994, marked the dawning of a new era. He spoke of the land, the green and the new values:

Each time one of us touches the soil of this land, we feel a sense of personal renewal. The national mood changes as the seasons change. We are moved by a sense of joy and exhilaration when the grass turns green and the flowers bloom. [...] We are both humbled and elevated by the honour and privilege that you, the people of South Africa, have bestowed on us, as the first President of a united, democratic, non-racial and non-sexist South Africa, to lead our country out of the valley of darkness. We understand it still that there is no easy road to freedom.⁶⁴

In the new ANC government, as a project of political reconciliation, the National Party was included and kept four Ministries that mainly presided over the country's natural resources: Agriculture, Environmental Affairs & Tourism, Minerals & Energy, and Provincial Affairs & Constitutional Development. The senate's standing committee responsible for Agriculture was chaired by the Freedom Front, a political party aiming to protect Afrikaner interests. In the new provincial scheme, the ANC government was the largest party in seven out of nine provinces, although it only accounted for three provincial Ministers of Agriculture (Bayley, 2000, p. 42). Game Farmers were pleased that the Ministries they communicated with most, Agriculture and Environmental Affairs, remained in hands of the National Party. The ministries remained strongholds for a conservative, white community. The leader of the National Party, Martinus van Schalkwyk, switched to the ANC and became minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism. The current leader of the Freedom Front Plus (a party which fights for the 'recognized right to self-determination for the Afrikaner people'), Dr. Mulder, functions as the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, and such departments maintain important liaisons with rural white communities. But let us not shift through time so quickly. The only Apartheid minister to keep the same post in the Government of National Unity (GNU) was Mr. van Niekerk. He appeared on both his wall pictures, although 'I did move back a bit as you can see'. When I spoke to him at the end of his career, he had covered the Agriculture portfolio for five presidents, while serving three different political parties.⁶⁵ A lot happened to South Africa's land under his

⁶⁴ Statement of the President of the African National Congress, Nelson Mandela, at his inauguration as President of the Democratic Republic of South Africa, Union Buildings, Pretoria, May 10 1994

⁶⁵ Starting out his career as Deputy Minister of Agriculture of the National Party in 1986, he later became Minister of Agriculture for De Klerk. After the National Party stepped out of the GNU, Mr. van Niekerk joined

auspices. The most central shift in his career, as well as in South Africa's agricultural economy, was the implementation of key mechanism of neoliberalism: measures to deregulate the marketing system.

KvN: In 1991, in De Klerk's cabinet I decided on the price of lucern, meat prices, bread prices, cheese prices.

DS: How did that work?

KvN: Well, we had a system with marketing boards and I was the controller.

While reaching out and bending his arm in a U-turn as to direct it at himself he continued 'we had a controlled marketing system and the lobby was here. If you wanted a bigger price or a smaller price, you came to me. The minister of Agriculture was either the hero or the scum!'. Apartheid South Africa had enforced an agro-economic system, which consisted of a multitude of laws that predicated state intervention. Pricing, access to resources, labour, and land distribution were, and in many cases still are, affected by these laws (Vink, Kirsten, & Van Zyl, 2000, p. 22). The institutions preferred certain types of farmers over others. Game farmers, as we saw in the previous chapter, were not subsidized, while any non-white (subsistence) farmers found themselves institutionally harassed and barred from any rewarding positions in agriculture. Commercial white farmers on the other hand were heavily subsidized. In the 1980s, the state granted direct financial assistance and subsidies worth 4,03 billion Rands to some 27,000 commercial white farmers (J. Kirsten, Edwards, & Vink, 2007).

Now that a new government was elected, these commercial farmers felt insecure about the future of their property and riches. Especially because the ANC's main political manifesto, the Freedom Charter, dictated that land, minerals, nature and wealth were to be 'redivided amongst those who work it' (ANC 1955). Occurring shortly after the 1989 downfall of communism however, concepts such as redistribution were quickly stripped from collectivist implications. Giliomee writes that 'if there was a decisive factor in the ANC's abandonment of the revolutionary struggle, it was the collapse of the communist states in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, which deprived the ANC of its most important sources of funding' (Giliomee, 1995, p. 92). Narratives on nationalization and expropriation were toned down and both the ANC and the NP reconsidered negotiations and engaged in them. South Africa's doorstep was thereby not treaded lightly by international neoliberal preachers and merchants. Economist

the Federal Alliance. The third and last political party he represented in Parliament was the Democratic Alliance, the main opposition party.

Carolyn Bassett shows how this (inter)national clique sought and found engagement with prominent ANC-leaders such as Mandela's successor Thabo Mbeki (Bassett, 2008b, p. 189). Through political deliberation the communist and trade union fractions of the leading party were either downplayed or redefined to dance to capitalism's tunes.

The outcomes of the negotiations were thus to write solid private ownership rights - especially concerning land ownership- into political documents and ultimately into the new constitution. Although there were critical voices, Bassett states that property rights resonated loudly also with the non-white population which was eager to change its status from an underprivileged and dispossessed group to one that was materially entitled (Bassett, 2008b, p. 190). When the Constitution was finally developed it embraced absolute property rights and indicated that property was not to be removed from current owners except under strict regulations and against market-value compensation (Republic of South Africa, 1996). To restrict future politicians from altering property rights or carrying out critical redistributions of wealth, it was negotiated that the property provisions were among the 34 principles that could not be altered without a two-thirds Parliamentary majority.

The formation of the constitution, as well as its underlying economic policies, was notably influenced by international actors, particularly the World Bank and the IMF. An \$850 million loan was taken from the IMF in 1993 (which according to critical scholar Padayachee was not necessary) and came with a wide range of free-market obligations (Padayachee, 1994, p. 588–589). South Africa's agriculture was subjected to trade liberalization through the GATT deal (after the Uruguay Round Agreement on Agriculture from 1986-1994) and also carried on with internal deregulation. For 'Kraai', the Minister of Agriculture, these new arrangements shone light on a path to relieve himself from 'difficult and arbitrary decisions such as setting the price of maize or wool' – which he had had to make each year under solid pressure from organized agriculture (Bayley 2000).

That was the first year when I took over the marketing system. So, I got the farmers together and said: listen! If you can't decide on the price, I'm not going to do it for you. I'm taking these powers out. That's where we started phasing out the controlled marketing system in a correct way.

Mr. Van Niekerk continued this line of thinking. 'We've got no boards anymore; we are in a free market system. In Mandela's cabinet I continued with this and by 1996 I think everything was...' he hesitates, 'well, except ach, it's not easy to phase out something like that'. He

explained that the deconstruction of market institutions could prove to be an over-inclusive as well as under-inclusive measure. That is, not all lobbying power was vested in the marketing boards which meant that price influencing would in some cases remain in place even when the boards were taken down. Besides that, the boards had several important public tasks such as industry monitoring and research that would be discontinued with their dismantling.

The road towards agricultural deregulation was laid out by the 'Kassier Report' of 1992 (written by Professor Eckardt Kassier's Commission which the Minister appointed). The report refers to the 'tyranny and arrogance of the status quo', a passage welcomed by the ANC which noted the extent to which Agriculture was dominated by vested interest. It was unwelcome to organized agriculture which deemed the report to be 'arrogant, shallow and academic' (TAU in Farmers Weekly 25, 1992), and blasted the commission for not having any farmers in it, only 'academics who were known for their belief in liberal marketing system' (Bayley 2000, 45). Most marketing boards were dismantled after the Kassier report set in. The last boards were taken apart by the 1996 Agricultural Marketing Act's sunset clause that dictated all boards to be closed one year from the signing of the Act. The 'status quo' was coerced to make new plans. The re-appointment of the NP Minister Van Niekerk - who was criticized, but remained approachable and respected by the white farming community - bought some time in this respect. Before their abolishment, the control boards were reported to have at least 1067 million Rands in reserves. To guard these reserves numerous actions were taken by the control boards, the industry and to some extent the Minister 'which had the effect of making it difficult for any new Minister of Agriculture to influence the use or disposal of control board assets' (2000, 62). Whereas some control boards were forced to shut down, others could close voluntarily and shift funds away from government control. The Minister amended the Co-operative Act in 1993 so that co-ops could be converted into companies, with the result that assets could be shifted correspondingly. The asset disposal clauses of cotton and meat schemes were altered in such a way that assets could go into trusts of which the details were unspecified by law. Two days before Minister Van Niekerk left office, a similar amendment was signed off for South Africa's wool scheme.

Nonetheless, the deregulation scheme had serious impact on the landowning community and those who lived on these lands. With the loss of fixed loans, drought relief, subsidized fencing and other financial support, many small and medium sized landowners were forced to sell their property. The Cato Ridge Abattoir for instance functioned well, until in 1994 the Meat Board was abolished.

Along with the Meat Board went their guaranteed floor price to farmers, and their related control over quotas to be slaughtered at each major-centre abattoir. The meat industry quickly realized that it was more sensible to slaughter animals at their area of origin instead of railining them as livestock for many days. The big abattoirs became white elephants overnight (Selmer-Olsen, 2004).

Tax schemes changed, for example by the extension of the period within which capital purchases could be written off from one to three years (Bayley 2000, 78). Labour legislation introduced minimum wages in the country's attempt to alter human relations on the land. Real food prices went up, while real land prices and farm incomes came down.

According to a state survey 700 000 jobs were lost in the farming sector. The total debt

of commercial farmers increased substantially to 17196.7 million Rand in 1992 (Bayley 2000, 42). In the process, professor Doreen Atkinson shows, farmers attempted to have 'as few as possible black families on the farm' in anticipation of farm dweller's legal empowerment (2007, pp. 123–124). The question that deregulation posed to farmers was how to avert further risk. How does one keep one's land and grow financially whilst being cut off from subsidies and state control? Landowners answered this question by shaking up their business models and choosing for diversification. New business registrations doubled in the period between 1993 and 1997 (J. F. Kirsten & Vink, 1999; personal communication professor J. Kirsten, 2010). Farmers branched out their assets, land-use and business models. Many chose for what I call bio-diversification, in which an increasing number of natural entities were privatized, marketised and commodified.

With wildlife being legally safeguarded for privatization and monetization through the Game Theft Act, wildlife utilization was ever more perceived as an economic alternative to keep land-ownership gainful. As shown in figure 4.1 Smith and Wilson's study on changing land use trends in the Eastern Cape attest to this and shows that an 'unprecedented boom in game based operations' occurred from 1991 onwards (Smith & Wilson, 2002, pp. 10–11), directly parallel to the privatization of wildlife and ongoing deregulation of agriculture.

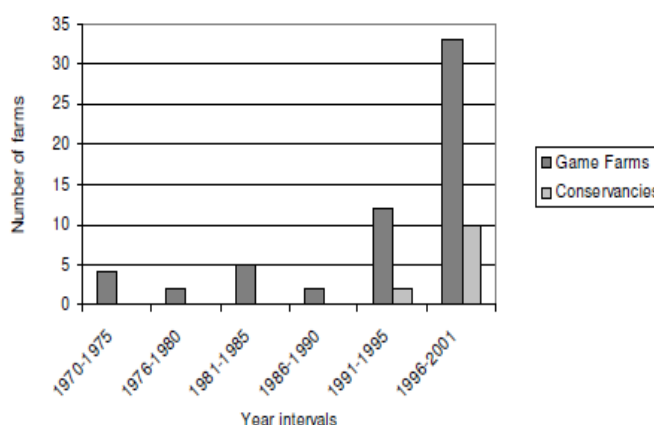


Figure 4.1: Rate of land conversions to game farming in the Eastern Cape (from Smith and Wilson 2002)

Farmers chose to diversify production methods, consolidate land to amplify income, and cut costs for labour. Game farms provided a multifaceted stratagem to do all three.

Safety and Security

The fences, but also the weapons and monitoring activities that are required by ‘conservation laws’ show how environmental policy and security issues are tied up. Jan Isaacs., a game farmer, says the link between security and conservation is unmistakable and that the adequate enclosure of his ‘conservancy is really only for security reasons’ (Interview 2010). A conservancy is a collection of individual properties of

Game Farm for Sale: This is one of those Eastern Cape game farms that comes with stupendous fencing which provides utmost protection and security. It comprises of an old farm house with ceilings made of yellowwood along with four well decorated bedrooms, thatched stables, proper shades, an exterior lapa, and three stone hunter chalets amongst a wild setting. You will find a strong underground aqua system which receives water from the Voel River which flows so close to the property. Staying here, you would just love to spend some time with 150 Kudu, Mountain Reedbuck, Blesbuck, 150 Impala, 70 Red Hartebeests, 9 Sable Antelope, 50 Eland, 200 Springbuck, 50 Gemsbuck, 20 Zebra and 25 Black Wildebeests. This farm not only comes with game, it comes with gaming properties as well. (ripponproperties.co.za, Grahamstown. 25/10/11)

which the owners have decided together to take down their fences for conservation purposes, and are awarded by conservation benefits accordingly. Jan’s conservancy is not a real conservancy since it has not dropped its fences. ‘We applied for the area to be classified as a conservancy to be allowed to put up booms and close the public roads. This gives us protection against anybody who is up to mischief’ (Interview J.Isaacs, 2010). Similar narratives were given by individual game farmers who mentioned that security was at least one of the most important drivers for their conversion to WBLU. The comments are to some extent reminiscent of broader security narratives in South Africa. Residential and commercial social spaces throughout the country, habitually populated by the upper class, are becoming more ‘fortified’ and delimited by high boundaries and hard line security measures (Durington, 2006, p. 150).

Sociologist Durington shows that each South African city determines its own unique type of security. Game farms show how this observation applies to rural areas as well. The upper class of South Africa’s rural society has redefined its own residential and social spaces while taking specific histories, cultural aspects and traditions into account. In game farms, divisive notions such as security and separateness have been ‘wrapped around notions of ecology and the environment which are seen as safer issues to deal with rather than aspects of crime, fear or racial exclusion’ (Durington, 2006, p. 151). Durington speaks about eco-estates, a fenced-off residential area which brands and markets itself by emphasizing nature. For clients

and residents of game farms and eco-estates, the ‘pervasive fear’ for wild animals and crime is made both visible and invisible (Hammett & Jayawardane, 2009, p. 223). Typically, high fences and locked gates are visible when entering game farms, but are secreted from client’s sight during their stay. Game farms are increasingly becoming eco-estates (or vice versa), and come with conservation policy that legitimizes maximum security measures for animals as well as humans. Fences must be erected to warrant trade in species and protect animals from escaping, while at the same time they have the latent function of shielding unwanted persons from private property. Besides this, due the wildlife hunting industry, policy privileges professional hunters to have higher numbers of arms than other citizens. Wels argues that security reasons are the most important driver for conservancies and mentions an ‘almost obsessive attention for game guards, their numbers, their training, their activities, and their effectiveness in curbing poaching on the properties’ in the early years of conservancy formation (Wels, 2003, p. 154). Whether it is on private or co-operative game farms, the reasoning is similar. Armed patrols guard elephants and rhinos, but simultaneously endow one’s property with top-notch security. Besides this, environmental policy has made it permissible to keep predatory animals such as lions, cheetahs and rhinos on private property, which contribute to farm security as well. Environmental policy has made it mandatory to feature security warnings about them outside farms. Wildlife species hereby provide good hunts, meals, livelihoods, and legitimize the erection of a secure fortress.

Security has become an important political narrative for South Africa’s rural community (e.g. Roelofse & Helm, 2012; Wegerif, Russell, & Grundling, 2005). No respondent I came across was as vocal about security issues as Susan Wilkinson. Susan is a woman of British descent who works as an artist and is a spokesperson for an agricultural union. After some questions, her words turned into passionate verse:

I want to go back to safety
I want to go back to security
I want to go back to discipline
I want to go back to a country that works,
With electricity, without potholes and all that
And I know that my beautiful South Africa won’t work with all these different ethnic groups;
there’s never been more racial and ethnic tension and ethnic violence as there is now. I don’t
want it.
I don’t want to live like I am living

I don't want to carry a gun
 I don't want to be part of a farm-security system
 I don't want to be fighting in politics
 I don't want to be in the media, on the media, to talk to the media anymore
 I want my children to be safe
 I want to sit in my studio and smoke joints one after the fucking other
 I want to paint paintings
 I want to listen to Pink Floyd loud, without listening whether the dogs are barking
 I want to get stoned, listen to Pink Floyd and paint. I don't want all this crap.
 So, what is my alternative?
 Should I move to Maui and smoke lots of wowy?
 Or should I stay here and look after all that I've built up here and worked for.
 What's the alternative, a 'Boere republiek'?
 No, if I think of that I see people that are anal and come in to my house to be stiff and conservative.
 And I don't want to live under the ANC-regime. They have proved they are hypocrite, corrupt, communist, cocky, incompetent. They are taking the wealth from the people: the poor are now poorer than they've ever been.
 So, what is my alternative? Tell me. (Interview S.Wilkinson 2008)

Susan now organizes farm-security systems, which are a protest against the government's shortage of rural protection, and are reminiscent of South Africa's old commando system (Wels, forthcoming). The farming community has made rural attacks on landowners into a political subject matter. Farm attacks are by some farmers presented as part of an orchestrated campaign to drive whites off the continent, while farm dwellers believe that farmer's security networks are 'covert actions' by remaining Apartheid forces (Manby, 2002, p. 88). In studies by South Africa's police force no substantive evidence is brought out for either belief. Farm crime is generally considered criminal instead of political and in some cases occurs because of labour conflicts (ibid).⁶⁶ The rate of farm crime and murder is extremely high compared to neighbouring countries, but not necessarily compared to other sectors of South African society. Human Rights Watch and others have commented that South Africa places a disproportionately

⁶⁶ See for example, JC Strauss, *Attacks on Farms and Smallholdings No.2 of 1998* (Crime Information Analysis Centre, 1998) and J C Strauss, *Attacks on Farms and Smallholdings, No.1 of 1999* (CIAC, 1999); Martin Schönteich and Jonny Steinberg, *Attacks on Farms and Smallholdings: an evaluation of the rural protection plan* (Pretoria, Institute of Security Studies, 2000); and Duxita Mistry and Jabu Dhlamini (March 2001), a study commissioned by the SAPS and based on in depth interviews in prison with forty-eight individuals in five provinces convicted of crimes ranging from robbery to murder against farm owners.

high and politically charged focus on farm murders ‘at the expense of protecting farm workers from abuse by farm owners’ (Manby, 2009, p. xiii). The authoritative HRW-report shows that farm-workers and other rural dwellers are more vulnerable to violence than their employers, and are ‘less likely to get help from the police and courts.’ (“South African Farm Workers at Risk” 2001). On game farms, where farm dwellers do not control most security measures, this is especially apparent. Farm worker John Mzingwe, who I interviewed in the Grahamstown area and mainly works as a security officer, made this clear:

JM: My job is security; standing by the gate and walking around.

DS: How do you secure the place? Do you have a gun?

JM: Haha, nooo nooo! We walk and then we see something and then we report it. We don’t have any protection or weapons.

DS: What about those buffaloes here?

JM: Man, it is dangerous here. I want out, but we are locked in. How can I find something new? I have to stay by the gate all the time (Interview J.Mzingwe, 2010).

Besides the security of life and limb, South African farmers customarily include ‘stock theft’ into rural security discourses. Virtually all Eastern Cape farmers who have converted to game, mention the impact of stock theft on farming activities (See also Langholz & Kerley, 2006). ‘With game ‘it’s much easier, people don’t come and steal your game at night. They can put snares out and take one or two in a week. But they can’t harvest all your sheep or cattle on a night’ (Interview R.Venter 2010). Poaching does happen on game farms, and game farmers complain about the weak punitive measures against such offences, but (if one omits the recent influx in rhino poaching through organized crime) incidence is relatively low.

Stock theft is not only committed by persons however, predator species are accused of stock theft also. The common assumption is that wildlife farms are cesspools for such predators like jackals and caracals, and it is assumed that game farming is hardly impacted economically by this form of predation (personal communication sheep farmers Cradock area 2009). Game farmers dispute these claims and many I spoke to have predator control programs in place:

This last year for example, in 2008, we were able to kill 52 jackals and 52 caracal. This year we’ve already killed 50 jackals and 38 caracal and over the last 12 years, just on my property.

I got the records here to show you: we've killed 1200, 600 caracal and 600 jackal⁶⁷ (Interview T.Dysel, 2009).

Game farmers in the Cacadu region say jackal, caracal, and leopards especially take their game and those who have been farming for a longer time would like to see the return of the bounty system (described in Chapter III) which they say was dismantled shortly after 1994.

We had a bounty system over here that we had done via the Uitenhage divisional council [...] but they sent us a letter and they just stopped it. Then we had a bounty system going and I was chairman of that committee for a period and it worked exceptionally well because the funds were raised by the farmers who paid in their divisional rates and part of this was predator control amounts. Say you paid something in the region of 50 cents a hectare or so. And we then had our farmers association supporting it so if anybody didn't pay that was within that farmers association or district, they would be approached and pay and at one time we had 20,000 rand in the bank which was processed for this damage causing animals, predators, vermin, call it what you like. And it functioned exceptionally well till they took it away and collectively slowly these animals increased in numbers (Interview T.Dysel, 2009).

A similar narrative exists around commando structures where military veterans (a considerable part of the male population) were under Apartheid organized in such a manner as to uphold rural security. At one stage there were 186 of these units with an estimated 50,000 to 70,000 individual commando members whereby weaponry was provided by the state. The system was phased out between 2003 and 2008. There are wild speculations why the government is tightening fire arm control – a fiery and ongoing issue for (game) farmers - and is disbanding security and predator control groups. Government generally states that monitoring firearm possession and use is related to upholding national protection. According to former Minister of Defence Mousioua Lekota the phasing out of commando structures was 'driven partly to counter racist elements within some of commandos, but also because of constitutional issues.'⁶⁸ Lately many private security initiatives have developed in this domain, especially ones such as Susan's farm security patrol (or "Nick's farm patrol plan in Wels, forthcoming).

Police has failed to look after farmers in this country. We can't rely on the government, on the police so the idea is to get this going on the ground level, work with the police but mainly 'ons

⁶⁷ It is common in the South African wildlife sector to reduce wildlife to singularity as is done in this quote by talking of '600 jackal' instead of '600 jackals' (See Chapter VI and Stibbe, 2001, p. 151).

⁶⁸ See <http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/commandos-threaten-to-turn-to-crime-1.234204>

is op onself aangewees' (we have nobody but ourselves to solve it). As long as they help it is fine, but should they fail or refuse to help then we will do what we have to. Police is on same radio communication, so they will hear what we are doing. Say there is a murderer on foot; we will close off roads, go in on foot and help find him. Last year there was a farmer shot with his daughter on his lap – in an area of 100 by 100 km's 280 farmers were mobilized, even using private helicopters. Police was watching what we were doing. We caught the guy. The benefit and joy is that once you dominate the area crime goes down. We had lots of theft, since we started patrolling there is no crime. No vehicle, pump, cable theft, no break-ins, nothing (Interview S.Wilkinson, 2009).

Land Reform Trepidation

Fretful as to what the future of land reform will bring, some South African game farmers have opted out of the land market altogether. 'Farmers hate talking about land reform', a game farmer's wife told me after I asked her why some landowners had refused to engage with this research. The topic is contested amongst game farmers and generally either disregarded or met with anger. From time to time politicians target game farms and white landowners explicitly as land that should be nationalized and/or redistributed and thereby invoke fierce reactions. Former minister Thoko Didiza of the Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs questioned the production value of game farms (in Daily Dispatch: Thursday 9 May 2002) and suggested a moratorium on game farms at the 2005 land summit (Govender, 2005). Agricultural minister Xingwana threatened to regulate or even prevent farmers from converting their livestock farms into game farms by means of a Land Use Management Bill (Steyn, 2010). Mr Nkwinti, the minister of land reform,



Figure 4.7: Game farms under fire! (www.wrsa.co.za, visited in June 2010)

described game farms as 'elitist' and said they effected a 're-colonisation of the countryside' (Groenewald in Haywood, 2007). When a new bill on land reform was negotiated in 2010, two high-placed officials of Rural Development and Land Reform said game farms in Limpopo, Mpumalanga and the Eastern Cape were being looked at for nationalization, as they 'do not contribute to food security' (Deputy-Minister Phaala and Director Gwanya of Land Affairs in Beeld, 3 March 2010). The day this appeared on the front page of the Afrikaans newspaper 'Beeld', I was at the national wildlife rancher's organization WRSA. The executive manager, usually a very optimistic man, was now noticeably frustrated and in no mood to be interviewed. Aloud, the manager asked himself what all his hard work had been for and wondered if it had any significance to continue.

We have set up so many meetings with them but we were just never able to get an appointment. This new Minister of Agriculture... after many cancellations our meeting was set for Thursday; they cancelled again yesterday. We have got the statistics to show we are producing income, creating jobs, a lot of protein production: we are contributing, but they don't see it! They don't recognize it, so it will be just explaining to these guys what we are doing...again (Interview A.Pretorius, 2010).

After our meeting, picture 4.7 appeared on the WRSA website, showing the 'Beeld' article and an appeal for recruitment: 'Game Farms under fire! Are you willing to give up your game farm? Are you protected against government plans?'. At an election rally in Kimberley on May 7th 2011, ANC's former Youth League president Julius Malema (now leader of the new Economic Freedom Fighters) fired up the national debate when he said land was to be taken back from landowners 'because the whites took our land without paying and transformed them into game farms.' He commented on the failure of the willing seller, willing buyer system and pronounced to loud applause: 'we all agree they stole the land, they are criminals; they should be treated like that'.⁶⁹

In rural South Africa this fear sometimes leads to break-aways. Robert Maine for instance, by many seen as a founding father of game farming in the Eastern Cape,⁷⁰ points to parallels with neighbouring Zimbabwe, where an extreme land reform program ousted virtually

⁶⁹ www.iol.co.za May 7, 2011; restated in the ANCYL political report 'It's time to dispossess our oppressors', 16 June 2011.

⁷⁰ The provincial game management association, the ECGMA, was established in a meeting on his property. He was a founding member of the national SAGRO (see previous chapter) and made conservation and ethical hunting a lifetime task. His property has been in the family since the nineteenth century, consists of a cattle farm and a game farm and enjoys protected status as a black eagle reserve.

all white landowners off their land without compensation over the last decade, and opted for a willing buyer-willing seller program (personal communications R.Maine 2010). Son-in-law Owen Cooling, who has been the farm manager for some time, explained that Mr. Maine was worried that the prices of land will drop and that his farm will become valueless in a decade. ‘I would have fought for it, but who knows what will happen here?’ (personal communications O.Cooling 2010). On the first of January 2009 the farm was sold to government and Mr Maine appointed beneficiaries; locals who had worked on the farm and had agricultural experience there. In the summer of that same year, local land affairs officials ‘literally walked in’, declared that progress was too slow and appointed a new manager as well as new beneficiaries. These new beneficiaries were chosen in cooperation with a national union for ‘emerging farmers’. All equipment was sold to this organization, which got a three year lease for the property. Dan Marawu, the organization’s director and appointed farm manager, complained that although his organisation can partially finance the necessary investments on the farm, the banks are harsh: ‘we may lose management of this farm in three years time, so who will give us good money? Banks give no loans whatsoever’ (Interview D.Marawu, 2011). According to Mr. Maine, the previous beneficiaries are worst off. They got no compensation or pardon whatsoever. Mr Maine and his wife moved to a coastal town and bought property from the money government offered them. Son-in-law Owen and his wife moved to Johannesburg, where he set up a consultancy that specializes in land reform projects, government relations, and environmental management. The consultancy was offered an assignment by the emerging farmer’s union to supervise the estate and some other farms in the Eastern Cape. The remaining farm workers on the estate are not so fortunate however and told me they fear an insecure future. The estate’s hunting lodge is still in the hands of the Maine family, and the ladies who work there don’t know what will happen to them. The reform process has led to hunter’s cancellations. Other workers on the farm and in the hunting section were retrenched, and the women fear being replaced in the process of land reform too.

The case illustrates that farm dwellers and workers are not necessarily beneficiaries of land reform on the property they dwell upon. On the contrary, they may be worst off. David Hughes mentions that white landowner’s prejudice-based paternalism in Zimbabwe has in some cases sheltered farm workers from a harsher political economy. Although my respondents cases are quite different, this particular case shows that the opted leave of the landowner was relatively beneficial for himself and family members, while it led to uncertain and worsened conditions for former dwellers and employees (Hughes, 2010, p. xvii). This partly has do with the definition of ‘beneficiaries’ in restitution and redistribution cases, which is often

ambiguous. With government's current preference for 'productive' commercial farming, livelihoods in tourism, hunting, subsistence-farming and other forms of land-use may specifically be disregarded. Simultaneously this case, which is one of many, shows that land reform policy is feared by landowners and leads them to not only aggressively defend their rights to property, but also to part with their land. When I asked another Eastern Cape farmer about the story he affirmed Maine's worries.

As yes, the Duke. He sold. And if the Duke sells, that tells you something. That really says something; the Duke was a fighter. He had great daughters, but if one had been a guy, maybe he would have still been there to fight with us (Interview J.Viljoen, 2010).

The quote points to the patriarchal tradition of handing land from father to son, but also gives a glimpse of a community that senses despair. Jaco Viljoen's story is somewhat similar to the story above; his property is monumental and has been in the family for more than a century. His house and stories are full of family history; he is proud of his lineage, proud of the land, and his walls have family trees and photos to attest to this. Yet, when we speak of the Maine-case, he is negative. 'This whole place is going down the drain, you'll see'. He continues, 'I told you about my father and grandfather and all that. But if you offer me good money now for my farm, it's gone, I'm selling' (Interview J.Viljoen 2011). A Grahamstown property broker who specializes in game farms told me a similar narrative. He tells me that those wanting WBLU want large properties. Game farms are typically larger than normal farms, so that in the rise of the industry, he, as a property broker, has had to secure land consolidations. Because game farmers want larger properties than existing cadastres, it is his task to speak to a compound of landowners and try to get all of them to sell their land so that it can be joined. He tells me a typical story of an American client who wants to invest in a trophy farm in collaboration with well-known Eastern Cape wildlife outfitters.

There were over twenty properties and we had secured twelve. This American was interested and had millions of Rands to buy the whole thing. When he said 'go', within a month we got the rest. You see, every farm is on the market. You have very few 'outjies' (Afrikaans for 'old man' or 'old chap') who are really attached to their farms, who are sentimental and all that. Some may say my father had this farm, and his father and so on, but very few... I'm telling you. Even those ones, all the farms are on the market, you just gotta know the right price. We went to these farms and offered something, say 4000 Rands/ha and they said 'great'. If

foreigners come in with crazy prices you make deals. I mean, 4000 was well within our budget, so we got all of them (Interview J.Flowers, Grahamstown, 2011).

Not only did multiple farmers make a difficult and critical decision to change their lives within a couple of weeks, these decisions were equally made for the farm workers and dwellers who were dependent on these properties. To a degree, the stories above show that farmers may feel connected to their land, but are willing to make uncompromising economic decisions and do so overnight. Over the last years, the protection of land has been one of the key driving issues of farmer's unions. Farmers define present times as uncertain and hostile to them, with 'land' clearly being the asset that is at stake.

Land reform as a Catalyzer for Conversions

Besides fears, I wish to look at land reform policy more thoroughly and suggest it also plays a role in the consolidation of land and the conversions to WBLU. It is not my intention to give a full overview of the land debate as this has been done extensively by others (Adams, Sibanda, & Turner, 1999; Aliber & Cousins, 2013; Hall, Jacobs, & Lahiff, 2003; Hebinck & Fay, 2006; Lahiff, 2007; Ntsebeza & Hall, 2007; O'Laughlin et al., 2013; Walker, 2008). What I will attempt to do is show how game farms slot into the so-called 'land question'. How do game farms affect land reform and how are they themselves affected by its mechanisms? I will look especially at the role of agricultural productivity in land reform policy, correlations between land reform policy and game farm conversions, and changing tenure security on farms due to wildlife conversions. Since the wildlife sector takes up such a large portion of land, it is surprising that this angle has hardly been brushed upon in public debate and in literature (Andrew et al., 2013; exceptions being Ngubane & Brooks, 2013).

South Africa's notion of land reform is conceptually and empirically inseparable from an economic system founded on private property and the legal rights associated with exclusive ownership by individuals (Devereux, 2001, p. 254). Redistribution implies a rearrangement of goods and thereby also a system in which private users can acquire, keep and transfer goods. At the same time, as a political project, post-Apartheid South Africa is all about independence, equality, and poverty reduction, so land reform 'is about all these things too' (Thompson in Law & Mol, 2002, p. 166). Nearly all debates on land reform in South Africa have been deconstructed along the existing policy pillars: *restitution* – policy to return land to those who are historically dispossessed, *redistribution* – policy to distribute land to reflect South Africa's

demographics, and *tenure reform* – the awarding of land rights to those who work and live on land (which often legally belongs to others). All three pillars affect game farming. Based on this research I will make the argument that environmental land reform, through stewardship programs and conservation policy, should, but have not been taken into account in the mainstream land reform debate. Such programs are not carried out by the department of land reform and are based on different premises (such as the conservation of biodiversity), but are nevertheless land reform programs in which landowners receive state recognition and benefits to acquire or strengthen land claims. Moreover, in contrast with the land reform policies, these ambitious policy programs have turned out to be more effective and successful in changing the ownership status of land. Game farmers play a particularly interesting role in such programs.

Restitution

The policy of land restitution is rights-based and entitles one to property or equitable redress in the case of dispossession of land as a result of past discriminatory practices after the 19th of June 1913. This date, the baseline, marks the passing of the Native Land Act (No.27 of 1913), which incorporated territorial segregation by law for the first time since the founding of the Union of South Africa in 1910. Consequentially, a white minority appropriated more than 80 per cent of the nation's land. The implementation of a 1913 baseline is contested as it gravely limits legitimate land claims and dismisses all victims of pre-1913 conquest. Most of the Cape Province was in hands of white settlers long before this date, which explains why only a few restitution cases have taken place in this region and why landowners and sellers see this as a benefit. Researcher Jannie Wessels, from the University of Free State mentions in the Farmer's Weekly that the lack of land claims in the Western Part of the Eastern Cape contributes to a 'safe investment' (Van Rooyen, 2013).

Nationwide however, an analysis of the existing restitution claims shows that game farms, nature reserves and public parks have amassed a high quantity of cases (Scholes et al., 2009). A possible reason for this is that this form of land-use is a distinctive feature of the 20th Century. All game farms and virtually all public parks were established after 1913 and, because of their inherently exclusive ideas about landscaping, went paired with the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people. Since fenced-off nature is estimated to consume almost a quarter of South Africa (a territory in itself approximately the size of the United Kingdom,

Uganda or Romania), a high amount of claims on such land is explicable.⁷¹ A closing date for the filing of land claims was set for December 1998 and 63,455 claims were submitted (which were split up to a total of 80 000 claims after further examination). By June 2005 62,127 claims were settled, although the largest and most complex claims remained unresolved. A majority of these settlements involved returning equivalent goods, usually monetary, instead of restitution of dispossessed land. In 2011, after a string of protests against the manner in which claims were lodged and settled, Land Reform Minister Nkwinti openly desired the re-opening of a land claim programme ‘in order to afford an opportunity to millions of people left outside of the process to lodge their claims’ (SABC 10/5/11).

South Africa’s Cabinet Position regarding the settlement of restitution claims in protected areas, is noteworthy. When a restitution claim is laid on land deemed for conservation purposes, ‘where the land is used and maintained solely for the purposes of conservation and associated commercial and community activities’ (SANBI, 2009, p. 5), the title to the land may change hands although no physical occupation of the land will be permitted. The continued loss of land is compensated through multiple benefits such as revenue sharing, mandatory partner status in tourism development, access to natural resources, cultural heritage access, education and capacity building, and jobs. The management of the land is continued as part of the national conservation scheme however and handled by government (according to IUCN principles).

Redistribution

Unlike restitution cases, land redistribution programs strive to make ownership patterns more reflective of current demographics. Constitutionally speaking, clause 25 of South Africa’s constitution, also known as the property clause, is at the heart of the redistribution debate. This section determines the protocol by which property can be redistributed as it deals with consensual transfer as well as forced expropriation. The latter, section 25 states, is legal if and only if it is for public purpose and is compensated (RSA 1996). The definition of ‘public purpose’ is left to the interpretation of state executives, lawyers and others, although the section on ‘compensation’ further specifies that it is determined by examining a cluster of factors: the current use of the property, the history of acquisition, the market value, state involvement in the property and the purpose of expropriation (RSA 1996). Not many expropriation cases have

⁷¹ Public parks are said to consume 6.2%, whereas private game farms are, as we have read above, estimated to occupy up to 16.8% of South Africa’s land.

occurred as of today. Of the few cases that were successful, several were to the advantage of conservation policy rather than to disadvantaged individuals (see section on stewardship programs). The department of environmental affairs, maybe more so than the department of land affairs has booked success in terms of making landownership change hands. A senior advisor of the DEA's National Protected Areas Expansion Strategy tells me about this:

The first thing is to have a good reason to expand in that area, mainly for better biodiversity and better management and control of the land. Then we try to get a 'willing buyer, willing seller' and if there is absolute objection we have to look at alternatives. If it's an area we absolutely have to get, then we go through a process of expropriation (Interview G.Thompson, 2010).

Biodiversity conservation and prevention of land degradation can thus legally be applied in terms of the constitution's 'public purpose' or 'public interest' clause. A 2008 NPAES document, which set out the strategy up until 2013 states that 'we need to add 2.7 million hectares to the land-based protected area network, 88km to the inshore marine protected area network, 52 500 km² to the offshore marine protected area network in South Africa's mainland Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and 23 300 km² to the offshore marine protected area network in the Prince Edward Islands' (SANBI/DEAT, 2008a, p. vi).

Expropriation is thus possible and very much feared by the farming community, but is not often implemented in the case of land reform. In practice, South Africa's redistribution program has up until now chosen for 'market-friendly' land reform which aims to fully compensate landowners for voluntarily selling their land. Of the earlier mentioned cluster of factors that ought to determine compensation, monetary market-value has thereby become the main premise for negotiation. Unlike the expropriation clause that Environmental Affairs yields to select land, Land Affairs lets the choice to sell land and opt for redistribution with current landowners. Understandably the 'willing seller, willing buyer' system works in favour of these landowners. If the basis of negotiation would be unfavourable to them, for instance by putting the history of acquisition, instead of the financial market value at the centre of discussions, there would doubtlessly be few willing sellers.

After government buys property, the actual redistribution of land commences. Fierce discussions have erupted about which subjects should be awarded with what goods. Should the rural poor, women, farm dwellers, emerging rural entrepreneurs or new African commercial farmers be primary beneficiaries of land redistribution (Ntsebeza & Hall, 2007, p. 2)? Initially, from 1995-1999, the answer to this question was that poor households earning less than ZAR

1500 per month could apply for state grants up to ZAR 16,000 to buy land. This was criticized as it led to people pooling their grants, which became known as the ‘rent-a-crowd’ syndrome (Hall and Williams 2000 in Ntsebeza & Hall 2007). A respondent in the DLA says of this:

Because of the absence of resources, you force people to move into group farming, to bundle their resources together so that they can either afford ground or dress it up. What you then find, even if the farm is productive, the profit per capita is so low that people do not see the benefit. They want to work, but the farm cannot absorb all. As long as we lack funding, we will have group farming (Interview A.Xoliswa, February 2009).

Typically, special credit provision goes to the ‘land-hungry who qualify by dint of need (the equity argument) and serious intent and presumed ability to farm’ (Ntsebeza & Hall, 2007, p. 41). A high-placed official in the department of Land Reform, acknowledged the idea, but elaborated on the intricacies:

Eish, I can’t lie to you, things are really bad. Most of the farmers we have given land to, production has gone down, or there’s nothing going on. I feel irresponsible each time! We can’t be giving land to someone who walks through the door, who feels like he wants ground. There must be evidence to show training, theoretical and practical, and at the least we should have a belief that this person wants to farm. I want us to not only deliver 30%, but have delivered countless farmers out there. Ones that can farm on their own: black farmers in retail, in processing, in importing, even in game farming! (Interview L.Githongwe 2009).

Some days after this interview, in March 2009, an ostrich farm became the symbolic stage on which South Africa’s failing redistribution policies and agricultural solutions were showcased. An article in the Mail and Guardian reports:

Stripped of furniture and without running water, an ostrich farm outside Pretoria is a sad example of South Africa’s wobbly efforts to bring black South Africans on to farmlands still owned mainly by whites. Small-scale farmers who had rented the farm have now abandoned it, leaving the ostriches to languish in their pens, limping and infertile (Plantive, 2009).

The farm in question became a political symbol because the then minister of Agriculture and Land Affairs visited it and for the first time *reconfiscated* it through the new ‘use it or lose it’ policy. The ostrich farm was initially bought and rented out in 2007 to a group of beneficiaries,

but deserted in the winter of 2008. In her speech, Mrs Xinwana recognized that the beneficiaries received training, a bakkie, ostrich feed, a tractor and several other assets from the previous owner. The group received R70,000 from the local municipality and the former Minister alleged that ‘despite all these support systems, it is apparent to me that the beneficiaries are not passionate about farming’ (Prinsloo, 2009). By proclamation that ‘no farm must be allowed to lie fallow’ the farm was taken back for redistribution by government. Land Rights Activists as well as conservative farmers both criticized the action. The Surplus people Project called for an immediate halt to the taking of farms from historically disadvantaged farmers, as well as an end to farm evictions and thirdly, to the ‘scrapping of current market-based land reform policies which are responsible for the failure of the Hammanskraal ostrich farm’(Right to Agrarian Reform for Food Sovereignty Campaign, 16 March 2008). The conservative TAU SA on the other hand said the ‘ostrich farm disaster’ was merely a PR-stunt amid the ruination of hundreds of productive farms through the land reform program. They argued it showed the effect of ‘choosing candidates on the basis of their skin colour’, instead of on merit (TAU SA Bulletin 2009).

Whether it is an act of window dressing or not, the ‘use it, or lose it’ policy reveals an important intention of South Africa’s land reform program. That is, it does not allow beneficiaries of the program to not cultivate their new land. Cultivation is hereby equated to commercial agricultural production and any discussion on alternative forms of land-use is met with hostility. A high-placed official in Land Affairs told me the following:

We are considering the possibility that some want to go into commercial farming, and some don’t. Some for example are traumatized by the system, they don’t want to farm. But we have to put more restrictions on what the land use is for, otherwise you’ll have persons getting land free and not using it for anything. You’ve got to balance, land is a financial asset, and you’ve got to produce (L.Githongwe, 2009).

The interview fragment brings out the ambiguity of South Africa’s land program. Redistribution is seated on land reform’s passenger seat, and agricultural productivity is at the wheel. Productivity which is delineated in terms of narrow ideas on commercial agriculture, decides upon the landscape’s destination. A plausible reason for this is that for a long time land reform has been run from within the Department of Agriculture and has thus propelled a modern agricultural production ideology.

Advised by the World Bank (World Bank, 1994, pp. 219–223) government aimed to return 30 per cent of commercial farming land to rural previously disadvantaged people for commercial farming.⁷² The Reconstruction and Development Programme of 1994, a socio-economic policy framework to guide South Africa in transforming its imbalances, adopted this aim and targeted it for 1999. After a failure of delivery by 1999, as well as by the postponed date of 2014, it is unlikely that the target of thirty percent will be achieved by 2020. The members of the DoA whom I interviewed in 2008-2012 thought this target to be unfeasible. One stated it was simply a ‘politician’s catchphrase’ and reasoned that politicians only have short-term timeframes. Another criticized the goal as well as the rushed and narrow-minded pursuit of this goal. ‘If you rapidly accelerate land delivery, you are also accelerating failure’, the Director of Technical Services told me (2009). He explained that it may lead to land being used in ‘wrong and unproductive’ manners and reasoned that the allocation of land should be more aligned to the financial program in the rest of the department. That is to say, land may well be redistributed properly, but this is not the only good that is necessary for productive farming. If no capital is made available for other assets such as infrastructure, vehicles, animals and training, ‘the problem will grow bigger: you are accelerating then the unproductive use of the land.’ (ibid). The Minister of land reform admitted the unfeasibility of the 30% target recently, saying that 7% of the 82 million hectares of white-owned commercial farmland has been redistributed, of which nearly a third ‘has already leaked back to white owners, bringing the effective transfer down to only 4.5%’ (Boyle, 2010). These owners are, as was expressed earlier, frequently called in by government as partners to advise or mentor beneficiaries (Walker, 2008).

Game farm owners thus have the option to sell their properties to government for market-prices and have at times reclaimed their properties for lower sums after failed land-reform projects. At the same time these properties contribute to the official statistics on redistributed land and thereby compose achievement for some government divisions.

Tenure reform

By the end of Apartheid the majority of ‘non-whites’ were living either in native reserves, in townships (that were mainly designed to be labour reserves), or on private (often agricultural)

⁷² The figure of 30% originated in ‘Options for Land Reform and Rural Restructuring in South Africa’ put forward by the World Bank, which was presented in October 1993 at the Land Redistribution Options Conference in Johannesburg (Williams, 1996, p. 139).

property. A large population lived and worked on farmland without holding any title or rental rights to remain there. For those who intend to buy or sell game farms, land tenure reform is policy that provides ‘headache material’ (Interview J.Flowers). Jim, who is a game farmer and a property broker specializing in game farm sales, explains the trouble.

I try not to get involved if there are any families on these farms. I stay clear from them: they will come back to haunt you. Nothing but trouble, especially those seniors who have life rights to stay on the farm, they won’t go. You see, government issued this policy some years ago and it says that families are entitled to land if they are there for a while.

The Extension of Security and Tenure Act 62 of 1997 and Land Reform (Labour Tenants) Act 2 of 1996 are the key laws Jim speaks of and are installed to provide legal tenure security for farm dwellers by regulating conditions of residence and eviction. To the frustration of landowners, the legislation rules that persons who have resided on the land for ten years or more, who have reached the age of sixty years, or who have worked for the previous employer and now cannot supply labour due to ill health, may not be evicted from the land (ESTA 1997, chapter 4.8). Approximately three million people were estimated to live on private farms in South Africa in 2007 (Ntsebeza & Hall, 2007, p. 95; StatsSA, 2007). These farm dwellers have been much dependent on the landowner in terms of their lives and livelihoods. He or she is the custodian of the land, crops, species, houses, roads and gates, and farm dwellers are to keep their relationship with him from turning sour.

Land tenure reform may be called the weakest policy program of reform’s three pillars. There is an increasing amount of reports that suggest landowners use the policy to prevent farm workers from becoming ‘secure occupants’. Whereas ESTA stated that people had the rights to gain tenure after residing on the farm for ten years or more, or after reaching sixty, there are reports of persons being either dismissed or evicted just before these terms (field notes



Figure 4.8: Photo by author, Feb. 2012

ECARP). For game farmers especially, the rights to ‘commercial farming’, ‘livestock’ and ‘crops’ is in conflict with their vision on the land (cf. Wolmer, 2007). Most game farmers wish to have a wilderness area that resembles the Serengeti rather than a traditional farm. For workers to gain solid rights for ‘commercial farming’ threatens this view. Paradoxically, the gaining of rights by farm dwellers may thus lead to situations in which they are forced to relocate or work illegally. Partially, this has to do with government’s landscape visions rather than land reform. A 2010 Bill addresses ‘the need for productive use of agricultural land to meet the vision of sustainable, equitable and vibrant rural communities and food security for all’ (LTS release note, 2010). The department of Land Affairs, even when detached from Agriculture, shows its commitment to ensue traditional landscapes of commercial agricultural production. It is additionally stated that government should significantly enhance budgets and implementation programs instead of grinding laws (Hall 2011). Section Four of the old ESTA for example took up many rights of farm dwellers and was supposed to provide funds to secure these, but was hardly utilized. It is yet to be seen if the proposed extension of tenure security will go beyond the boundaries of paper.

Stewardship Programs

Stewardship programs are not social land reform programs, but environmental ones. Here I want to demonstrate how they cut through the land reform debates in South Africa, but are virtually absent from the scholarly and public debates on land reform. That is, South Africa’s government is unfolding policies to reclassify private land as conservation land to realize its protected area targets. This is particularly the case because the private wildlife industry has fenced almost three times the amount of land that government has set for conservation purposes. The proportion of South Africa that is formally protected area was 6.5% in 2011, whereas 16.7% is in hands of game farmers (SANBI/DEAT, 2011, p. 38). After pilot projects in KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, the Eastern Cape and especially the Western Cape a ‘stewardship program’ is currently adopted on a national level.⁷³ In this program, landowners are recognized as conservation custodians of South Africa’s biodiversity:

Biodiversity stewardship plays a central role in the implementation of the National Protected Area Expansion Strategy (NPAES) and the achievement of South Africa’s protected area

⁷³ See <http://www.capenature.co.za>. Successes in the Western Cape include 40 Contract Nature Reserves, 12 Biodiversity Agreements and 19 Conservation Areas through the Stewardship Programme (in 2010).

targets. It can also play a critical role in securing threatened ecosystems, in most of which establishment of large traditional state-owned protected areas is no longer feasible. Biodiversity stewardship provides a cost-effective mechanism for government to carry out its conservation mandate and achieve biodiversity and protected area targets (SANBI/DEAT, 2008b).

A conservation mandate, determined by national legislation and informed by international conventions such as the CBD prescribes that 12% of South Africa's land ought to be 'protected' by 2015. As only half this percentage was considered to be protected area in 2011 many millions of hectares of land are to be amalgamated in the coming year.⁷⁴ Three ways in which government wishes to reach these targets are by means of a) acquisition of private land, b) declaration of state land as protected areas, and c) by means of contract agreements with private landowners. As the state sees only limited applicability in the first two options due to fiscal constraints, public-private partnerships are actively been pursued. Now that wildlife production covers almost three times the amount of land that government has set for conservation purposes, the reclassification of private wildlife land is attractive for government's goal to



Figure 4.9. Boundary between an Eastern Cape stock farm (left) and a game farm (right) (photo by author).

⁷⁴ South Africa has now accepted that 12% is too high a target and aims to protect an additional 2.2% (2.7m ha) by 2014, which is in line with additional international conventions, namely Goal 7 of the Millennium Development Goals.

realize its protected area targets. After a successful pilot project in the Western Cape⁷⁵ (Cape Nature 2009:1) a ‘stewardship program’ is currently adopted on a national level. Through this program, landowners are recognized as conservation custodians of their land. Particularly game farmers who sell and produce nature and do not have stock overgrazing the land (as seen on the left stock farm in figure 4.9. Right of the road is a game farm) find their way to these programs.

To incentivize landowners to co-operate, the treasury has recognized the monetary risks landowners incur to secure biodiversity measures. Fiscal mechanisms have been developed to provide more secure conservation agreements (DEAT/SANBI 2008; 2011). A set of mechanisms was introduced in the Revenue Laws Amendment Act, passed in December 2008 (in effect from March 2009), to provide incentives for private biodiversity conservation. The extent of these inducements ranges from tax deduction for the removal of alien species, to having the value of the land deducted from one’s taxable income. The Bill ‘allows for significant levels of tax relief to landowners by creating mechanisms to deduct specified management costs as well as the loss of the right of use of land from income tax. In the case of the proclamation of a Nature Reserve the Bill makes provision for an income tax deduction and exemption from capital gains tax in respect of the cost to the landowner to acquire the land, plus capital expenditure to establish the contract nature reserve’ (SANBI/DEAT, 2008a, p. 3). Additional biodiversity-related fiscal reforms under discussion are the reduction of transaction costs associated with land acquisition for protected areas by exempting transactions from transfer duty, estate duty, VAT, capital gains tax and donations tax; and the removal of ‘perverse incentives in municipal property rates, which actively discourage conservation’ (DEAT/SANBI, 2008b, p. 75). The incentives depend on the type of agreements private landowners can commit themselves to:

- **Biodiversity Management Agreement:** Requires a minimum contract of five years. All conservation and maintenance expenses incurred under the agreement are treated as expenditure incurred in the production of income and for purposes of trade, and are thus deductible as an expense for tax.
- **Protected environment, nature reserve, national park:** Requires a minimum contract period of 30 years. All conservation and maintenance expenses are deductible from taxable income.

⁷⁵ Successes thus far in the Western Cape include: 40 Contract Nature Reserves, 12 Biodiversity Agreements and 19 Conservation Areas through the Stewardship Programme.

- **Nature reserve or national park:** Requires a minimum contract period of 99 years. In addition to the conservation and maintenance expenses above, the value of the land declared that is used only for conservation purposes can be deducted from the taxable income over a ten year period.
- **Alien and invasive vegetation:** Expenses incurred are to be allowed as a fiscal deduction for farming purposes (DEAT/SANBI, 2008b, p. 75).

When asked what sort of conservation principles are required to participate in this stewardship program, the Director of Cape Nature mentioned the recognition of ‘normal’ colour phenotypes, encouraging pure bred animals as hunting trophies or tourism attractions, discouraging demand for genetically modified animals, the promotion or incentivised hunting in natural distribution ranges and the removal of alien taxa (Interview S.Jacobs, 2010). Conservation officials and wildlife industry members have been at loggerheads about many of these principles, and are increasingly so now that the breeding of rare species has proven to be exceptionally lucrative. Pasquini et al. report a general distrust of public-private cooperation and quote a respondent, a landowner, who says that having “a state organization involved in your property always has a risk in terms of who the people are” (Pasquini, Cowling, Twyman, & Wainwright, 2010, p. 474). Most government officials I interviewed however reason that the establishment of public-private partnerships is the key mechanism to provide both parties with a win-win solution. This was exemplified during a presentation to the wildlife industry in March 2010. A high-placed Environmental Affairs officer proclaimed to work together with landowners to protect their assets, gain their support, and discuss their ideas about self-regulation. His concluding power point sheet stated:

- We need to develop practical and achievable incentives with commercial game farms/ranches
- The game industry should be sustainable and beneficial to conservation objectives
- Let us explore options for self-administration in partnership
- A sustainable future is possible for nature conservation and the game industry
- Conservation authorities should commit to provide a more professional service to the game industry (Field Notes, Wildlife Forum 2010)

Environmental policy and specifically the turn to public-private partnerships with landowners thus has an influence on land reform programs, although few scholars have looked into this (welcome exceptions are Kepe, Wynberg, & Ellis, 2005; Ngubane & Brooks, 2013).

SANBI director Mthetwe confirmed to me that the government has ‘the important target to manage and maintain South Africa’s biodiversity’ (Interview F.Mthetwe 2011). For this

reason, the land-use of land that is redistributed may not be altered: if it is under conservation before reform, it ought to remain under conservation afterwards. Some farmers as well as bureaucrats mentioned that conservation policy was a motivation for landowners to convert to game; particularly in the early 1990s when restitution as well as redistribution loomed. One game farmer commented that he is upset with the outcomes:

My game farm is promulgated by nature conservation; it's called Koppie Game Reserve. I was trying to get a certificate for this thing as a private game reserve and in those days nature conservation they held a certificate in front of your nose and said: 'listen, if you are classified as a private nature reserve, we can give you animals cheaper', and all that nonsense. It never happened, and now they are having their own big auctions. In fact, they are a hell of a big threat to the private game ranchers because they sell their stuff cheaper.⁷⁶

Promulgation by the conservation department was thought to elevate the conservation status of land and align private game farms with government aims to protect biodiversity. The rancher continued: 'at that point in time, we could see this thing is coming up on land redistribution and land expropriation so we thought if you are a private game reserve, you got a little bit of a higher status. It didn't work out well' (ibid.).

Land Prices and Redistribution

With government, tourists, farmers, and hunters pursuing wildlife-based land, it has become a sought-after commodity. 'If I would invest in anything in this country', a Kimberly businessman told me, 'it would be in wilderness. In land that has not been developed, the price of it is going to rise and rise and rise'. Frederick Nash captures this logic saying that 'wilderness becomes more valuable as civilization becomes more abundant and nature more scarce' (Nash in Nie, 2003, p. 313). Jannie Wessels, who researched land acquisition in the Eastern Cape's Willowmore and Steytlerville areas writes that primary reasons for buying land there are investment (24%), personal enjoyment (23%) and commercial farming (19%). Other reasons are game ranching, lodging, boutique farming, and hospitality, stating that 'while untouched land becomes rarer by the day, the beautiful pieces will always be precious items' (Van Rooyen, 2013). In interviews, property brokers nodded to such assumptions and indicated that the prices of private wildlife reserves have risen over the last 20 years, some of them increasing

⁷⁶ Interview with Cradock area game farmer by project member dr. F.Brandt.

ten to twentyfold in price. A real estate manager from Port Elizabeth gave me the following example: ‘a Dutchman bought this game farm just out of town in 2003 for 1000R p/ha. Now he has problems with his wife or something and it is on the market for 17,000R p/ha. I think it will go soon now for at least 12,500’ (Interview P.Saunders 2009). Such prices show that considerable amounts of capital are needed to establish oneself and succeed in the sector and that this in itself contributes to its exclusivity.

The government is involved in such high land prices as it has agreed, through its market-based land redistribution programme to pay for land that is marked for redistribution at market-prices. Recently it agreed to pay out more than R1-billion to settle a land claim on one of South Africa's most exclusive game lodges, the Mala Mala reserve in Mpumalanga, paying R71,000 per hectare. Guides to buying game reserves state that good game farms are easily worth R20,000 to R40,000. Langholz and Kerley in 2006 notice that the costs of establishing ecotourism reserves in the Eastern Cape rose with R10 million compared to 2004, to a new median of R42 million, although it must be noted that hunting farms are considerably cheaper. The rise in prices has partly to do with the expensive lodges that are added, as well as the fencing, game, and vehicles. The quality of game land and its proximity to airports, cities and attractions drives land prices up too, but compared to agricultural land ‘wilderness’ shows to be a good investment in terms of capital gains by land speculation (Geach, 2002). Geach shows that the presence of private game reserves drives surrounding prices up as well and allows neighbouring landowners to reap more than twice that amount for their land. This resonates with many of my respondents:

A lot of game farm owners are business-inclined, that’s how I bought my farm, I was a businessman owning a huge quarry, making tons of money and I needed something else to invest in, so I invested in a game farm. I’ll make my money back one day when I sell that farm (Interview F.Roelofs, 2010).

The price rises are particularly prominent in the vicinity of national parks, such as the Addo Elephant National Park in the Eastern Cape (Travis, Hobson et al 2002; Geach’s study mentions the Kruger National Park area specifically). An interesting link here is, again, government’s aspiration to buy land in such areas for conservation programs. I asked an outfitter who recently bought a game farm in the Addo area what he thought government’s plans were.

Addo is on this side of my farm, and then there is a mountain on that side (makes drawing). So, they were looking at buying up this area before I bought the farm, then they stopped and starting buying property along the coast-line. I'm sure they will probably want to buy this farm one day, which is good for me (Interview M.Turrell, 2010).

The game farmer would sell his farm for the right price, as 'you never know how things will go with South Africa's land' (ibid). The rising prices have led to complaints from conventional commercial farmers however who have fewer possibilities to buy land. Also, it has made it more difficult for a budget-constrained government to buy wildlife based land for reform (although the Mala Mala-reserve example shows it has not made it still happens). Scholes et al. (2009) show that some officials believe that land is deliberately been put out of reach of compensation programs. Landowners who have the capital to convert their land to game farms are not often willing sellers, but with new government-led redistribution schemes coming into place, the mechanism of raising prices may have effect. What adds in here is that land reform is mainly seen in the context of commercial agriculture. Converting to game land presages the removal of agricultural edifices, flora, fauna, and infrastructure. The costs of re-introducing all these features and taking down game farm configurations would have to be weighed in to redistribution schemes and budgets. In terms of a market-based, budget-constrained policy scheme, altering land-use and driving up land prices may provide adequate protection to prevent being targeted for redistribution.

Reforming Labour

A final policy shift that came up in virtually all interviews as a motivation to convert land is labour and labour-policy-related. Duncan Marais for instance, who recently started managing Entwenkeni game reserve, mainly complains about his workers. The roof of his lodge was plastered six months prior to our conversation, and already it is peeling off. 'I'm not racist', he starts out, 'but labour here is really of poor quality. I mean those guys just sit on their arses all day. It's just different than when you are from. There sure are some great Africans, but this labour here is worthless' (Interview D.Marais 2011). Endalweni lodge is starting up and I seem to be one of the very first visitors. The previous manager of the farm left some time ago due to conflicts with the Spanish owner. Duncan now tries to get his staff to make the 1200 hectare farm operational. I ask him whether there are many conflicts over work and he answers this is not the case. 'Luckily, we don't really need much staff here: just four to six boys who can help

with the tractor, the fences and roads'. This resonates with popular studies on game ranch management. Bothma et al (2009) mention that whereas land and wildlife purchases make up 80% of the necessary capital needed for developing a game ranch, running expenses can be relatively low, 'especially since a game ranch is usually not a labour-intensive industry' (Bothma 2009, p. 72). It is important to make a difference between types of game reserves here, as reports and interviews show that ecotourism farms may employ as much or more people as other farms (Langholz & Kerley, 2006), while hunting farms employ less. Game farms, and particularly hunting farms, are generally welcomed as an alternative to stock farming that is potentially less labour intensive (Cousins, Sadler, en Evans 2008b; Smith en Wilson 2002). Brian Jennings, who is the owner of a hunting and meat farm, told me:

It's less labour intensive yes.....if I were to convert my farm into purely a hunting and springbok producing enterprise, I would use less labour yes. I use secondary production myself, with the abattoir and turning meat into products, so I am probably using more labour (Interview B.Jennings, 2011).

Labour legislation reform is the one recurring reason that is given for the necessity to reduce workers. Such reform has increased minimum wages and security to employees (just as the already mentioned tenure security reform). Some have argued that labour shedding is a necessity of capitalist social organisation. Michael Hardt for example metaphorically writes that the capitalist system starts to resemble 'a machine that marches forward of its own accord, without labour, a capitalist automaton' (Hardt, 1995). This is in line what a game farmer told me when stating that 'farm workers are like petrol: they are replaceable. Sometimes you get bad petrol and it f*cks up your whole bakkie. Sometimes it runs out and you got to get new stuff' (Interview J.Plasket 2010). The 'automaton' reaps the earth searching for ways to utilize human biomass as fuel and, although brought as a joke, the metaphor shows what is typical of the labour system that South Africa's neoliberal high pressure-cooking system is producing. Low-skilled jobs are being slashed in a market that is being globalized as well as mangled.

Game farming, a once-off grand investment creates a new type of land-use apparatus. One must obtain land (>1000ha), infrastructure such as fencing and roads, accommodation facilities, wildlife and, depending on the sorts of species that are introduced, one can create machinery that is very low-maintenance. Frans Roelofsz was once the owner of a large factory in Port Elizabeth, involved in import and export. Now that he has made enough money, he decided to follow his childhood dream to be closer to nature and hunt more. He is the owner of

a medium-sized trophy-hunting farm and is passionate about the land and its animals, but replies the following when I ask him about work on the farm.

Boring, it's simply very boring. There is not much happening and it's seasonal; we start hunting in March and finish end of October, then what do you do? Well, nothing. On a game farm you check fences and water holes, it's not like you have to go in every day and plant plants and so on. I have got these little self-dipping boxes by the waterholes so the animals dip themselves. They just step on it and then it sprays, for all the ticks and that. Then you have to control the jackal and caracal. The guys do that when they walk around...they kill them (Interview F.Roelofs, 2010).

As most labour is irregular in its function and occasion, one does not need a large labour force. The existing small labour force on the farm is expected to work hard and constant. In Ian's quote above this provides the inconsistency. Work on a game farm is on the one hand presented as boring, almost redundant even, while on the other hand it is taken for granted that workers take care of the land throughout the year. I asked Frans about the labour on his farm.

DS: How many employees have you got?

FR: On the farm? Well, 1, 2...3.

DS: And do they work there fulltime all year round or is it when clients come in?

FR: No, they stay on the farm. They have got their houses in town, in Uytenhage, but they want to stay on the farm.

DS: Is it the guys who were with you on the bakkie?

FR: Yes, the old man has got his wife here and the younger one brings his girlfriend in when we have hunts and she will help in the house; cleaning, cooking, doing the beds and all that.

DS: And then you've got part time people coming in for fencing?

FR: No, we do our own. I told ya, there's not much to do here. Only if it is very serious, work like building some structure, do we get a subcontractor in, a guy who has got ten guys to do things quickly.

Within the wildlife industry and especially the ecotourism industry there are many functions (such as professional hunters, outfitters, security personnel, trackers, drivers, housekeepers, camp attendants, receptionists, bookkeepers, domestic workers, fence maintenance staff, skimmers, culinary staff, waiters, technical maintenance staff, game capture staff, photographer), although many of these functions can be performed by the same staff -

especially on smaller reserves such as hunting operations -, many functions are incidental, and many are outsourced. Because there is 'not much to do', few people work on the maintenance of a fairly large area. The workers are generally untrained and the high rate of national unemployment (as well as massive continental unemployment) leads to an easily substitutable work force. Thembi Landa for instance is a farm worker who works at the Black Oak game farm near Queenstown (Interview T.Landa 2009). He has many roles on the property: he patrols the land, monitors fences, checks the animals, helps with hunts, reports irregularities on the farm, and does construction labour. I ask him about his salary and he says it is not much, around 1000 Rands per month. South Africa has no country-wide minimum wage, but so-called sectorial determinations are determined by the Department of Labour for those jobs that are underrepresented in collective bargaining strategies. These sectors include domestic work, farm work, private security, hospitality, forestry, amongst others. When asking Thembi about his wage in terms of such sectorial determination he answers that he and all other persons on the plot are seen as farm workers. The interview takes place by his security post where he is controlling the gate of the property however, so I ask him if he knows security officers are to be paid more. 'They don't want to know about this. We are all seen as farm workers'. The conversation continues.

DS: What about the Department of labour?

TL: If they [the farm managers] find out we went there, we are gone. Yuuu!

DS: But has this happened?

TL: Well, I hear stories. We cannot go there – the inspectors will come here to check us and then what? They will find out and fire us.

Mr Mbete, an inspector from the Cradock Department of Labour, tells me that the sectorial determinations are often used to the advantage of landowners. Especially in the game farming sector, where hospitality, assisted hunting and security are widely advertised as provided services, people are miscategorised as farm workers. A recent study by Bhorat et al. confirms this and presents 'disturbingly high' estimates of minimum wage violation throughout South Africa (Bhorat, Kanbur, & Mayet, 2012). By utilizing data from the National Labour Force Survey the study shows that 45% workers are paid less than the sectorial minimum wage they should get, with the Security, Forestry and Farming Sectors showing the highest numbers of violations. In reply to a parliamentary question in November 2010, Minister of Labour Mildred

Oliphant came to a slightly lower estimate, saying that based on her department's inspections of 1744 farms, 35% of worker were found to be underpaid (Fin24, 2010). Mr. Mbete adds to this that game farmers are not forthcoming to trade unions or the department.

We cover an area of more than 150 square kilometres. We make an appointment and show up at their property for an inspection and the gate is closed. What should we do? I am not going to climb over that high fence haha. We drove an hour to get there. Then an hour back. We can't work like that.

Mr. Mbete told me there are only two inspectors working in this prime farming area. Consequentially, farms are inspected neither often nor thorough. A lacking budget in government funding does not facilitate the necessary inspections of farms. The quote reveals also that the relationship between inspectors and the inspected can be fraught.

When I went with environmental officials to game farms to inspect their land (see figure 4.10), I found no animosity as game farmers showed their land and cooperated fully. It did become clear however that environmental inspection departments were not sufficiently resourced either.



Figure 4.10: Inspecting fences (photo by author)

Both game farmers and inspectors complained that inspectors could not always invest as much time as they wanted to, but also did not have the appropriate material to do the inspections and registrations. The inspections I took part in for example, were carried out in small 2WD vehicles that could not enter the game reserves we visited. The inspectors were thereby dependent on the landowner to drive them around in his 4X4 and show those parts of the land he wished.

Mr. Mbete presented me with the sectorial determination forms and added that workers should not work for more than 45 hours a week, and not more than nine hours a day (see figure 4.11, updated with 2013 sectorial determination). Employees who work on Sundays or public holidays should be paid double the hourly rate:

| | Hospitality (> 10 employees) | | | Hospitality (<10 employees) | | | Farm Workers | | |
|-------------|---------------------------------|--------|-------|--------------------------------|--------|-------|--------------|--------|-------|
| | R.p.m. | R.p.w. | R.p.h | R.p.m. | R.p.w. | R.p.h | R.p.m. | R.p.w. | R.p.h |
| 2010 | 2209.0 0 | 509.83 | 11.33 | 1981.48 | 453.30 | 10.17 | 1316.69 | 303.84 | 6.74 |
| 2013 | 2692.7 4 | 621.45 | 13.81 | 2415.86 | 557.55 | 12.39 | 2274.82 | 525.00 | 11.66 |

Figure 4.11: Minimum wages in South Africa: 2010-2011 and 2013-2014

Employers may further deduct no more than 10% of the salaries for accommodation, as well as for food and also for loans and advances ('Guidelines for deduction', viewed august 2013, labour.gov.za). The minimum wage for private security officers is more difficult to track as it is dependent on region, years of employment and training, but ranging from 1579 to 3603 Rands per month and thereby lies significantly higher than farm worker's salaries.

Besides legal workers however, Mbete says there is much non-registered work. These people may be picked off the streets in town and work for wages that are not registered on pay slips. By externalizing work, costs for social services such as retirement, education, and the maintenance of workers' families, are offset. Foreigners hereby seem to be the ultimate 'biomass'. Landa, who was introduced in the last paragraph for instance, is a foreigner, a trained engineer from Zimbabwe. 'I'm from Harare', he says, and has been working at the game farm for two or three months. His main task is to operate a 'boom', which regulates a

public road that runs through his employer's game reserve. People who wish to drive through are stopped on both sides and registered. The time of registration, signature and the vehicle registration are noted. Landa says he does not enjoy the work; it does not require many skills, is boring, and the boss insists on long working hours.

The game farming industry aims to demonstrate that skill development is an important part of their work and that they both take up previously disadvantaged individuals and train them. A directive states that 'Phasa financially supports BEE in the professional hunting industry by raising about R1 million a year to educate people and help them enter the field. We've repeatedly asked the Eastern Cape Parks Board executive to stop their ideology-driven process of eradication and let these qualified candidates hunt and apply their trade in the national and provincial parks' (Interview T.Dysel, 2010).

The anthropologists Jean and John Comaroff speak about the advantages of unskilled and especially foreign workers for South African employees by cryptically invoking the image of zombies. 'The menacing dangers of zombification—the disoriented wanderings, the loss of speech, sense, and will, the perverted practices that erase all ties to kith and kin—serve to conjure with inchoate fears, allowing free play to anger and anguish and desire' (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2002, p. 799). The image is as metaphorical as Hardt's automaton, but nonetheless to the point. Zombie workers come from different market-systems in which money and work have different meanings. They are desperate for any form of livelihood, and accept even dehumanizing working conditions in crime, prostitution or exploited positions. They do not necessarily share South Africa's past of skewed power relations based on race for which they wish vengeance, redistribution or entitlement. They do not speak local languages and hence are literally made silent amongst co-workers. Their loss of speech makes them desired objects as they do not politically organize themselves or unionize. As one game farmer tells me, 'Zimbos do not toyi-toyi'.⁷⁷ Nearly all game farmers I interviewed work or have worked with foreign labour and are frequently eager to inform that they are the preferred workers on the farm(see also Brandt, 2013).

⁷⁷ 'Zimbo' is derogative slang for a Zimbabwean national, while 'toyi-toyi' refers to a South African form of dance that is commonly used to express protest.

Game Farm Conversions and Social Consequences

Because wildlife industry's great geographic expansion takes place in a country that has a large rural and agrarian population, Neumann states that a conflictual relationship has come to exist between rural African population and the predominantly white wildlife managers (Neumann, 1998, p. 4). Privately protected areas are regularly looked upon as 'wildlife playgrounds for a privileged elite' (Kepe et al., 2005). Commercial exploitation of wildlife is thereby often criticized to be an exclusive and excluding 'white-owned' form of property management (Slater, 2002; Spierenburg & Wels, 2006; Wolmer, 2007). Moreover, since wildlife ownership does not come about without land rights and plot sizes are typically much larger than in traditional agriculture, the questions 'who owns land?' and 'who should own land?' are particularly sore in this sector.

Farmers have always denied evictions and, it may be noted, evictions are not well documented in South Africa. Displacement of persons is certain to have occurred over the last decades, especially if one takes the rapid rise of the game farming industry and the lack of human occupation on wildlife reserves into account. The thin line between displacement and eviction is in these cases to be scrutinized.

Now farm dwellers rights to land are being fortified, farm owners cease to see them as farm workers and start treating them as squatters who are determined to appropriate land. Accordingly, tension is rising and many reports of eviction from private land have been tabled (Brandt, 2013; Naidoo, 2006; Wegerif et al., 2005). In a paper that surveys 139 ESTA-related cases in the Cacadu District, Lali Naidoo makes a direct correlation between land-use conversions to game farms and farm dweller evictions (Naidoo, 2006). In this report farm dwellers that reported about their lives after the conversions note worsening living conditions and livelihood options. In the cases that farm dwellers were not displaced they mentioned that the presence of wild animals led to anxiety over their safety of life and limb. In Brandt's dissertation a black farm manager states that game farmers with send their workers into the field during night and day without weapons: 'if there are lions, they do not care... in the olden days it was impossible for a black man to carry a weapon. He could kill the farmer. That is why farmers do not give guns to their workers' (Brandt, 2013, p. 198). Besides fear, the presence of wild animals and the high fences have effects on the movement of farm dwellers. Luck mentions the prevalence of continuous 'tacit evictions' in her 2003-thesis whereby farmers attempt to 'make life difficult for the resident farm workers' (Luck, 2003, p. 91). The letter of the law is complied with in these cases, although intentions orientated towards eviction are

suspected. In the case of game farms landowners may for instance oblige workers and dwellers to sell or reduce their livestock in line with the wilderness vision of the land manager (Naidoo, 2006, p. 3). An affidavit from Nesiwe Beauty Bashe, an Eastern Cape farm dweller, attests to this:

1. I worked on this farm for Mr Peter Long from 1984 until he passed away in 1996. I lived on this farm for the past twenty years.
2. In 2000 Mr Long sold the farm and it converted to what is now known as the Kikuyu Game Lodge.
3. Prior to the conversion to the game farm, I owned five cattle. All occupiers on the farm had access to four grazing camps. Our livestock had grass for grazing because we were able to practise rotational grazing. After the conversion the new owners took three grazing camps for their game farming operation. The one grazing camp is inadequate for my cattle.
4. Before the farm was converted to the game farm, I had access to a dam, where we used to get drinking water. With the conversion to the game farm, we are forced to share this water source with the game animals. This water source is drying up because of these animals. We fear contracting diseases from consuming water that is contaminated by animal waste.
5. Before the conversion, there were no fences with gates that were always locked. After the conversion fences were erected, gates were put up and are locked at all times.
6. Due to the fact that the main gate is always locked, the occupiers were forced to make a hole in the fence which is the only exit and entry point to the farm. This hole in the fence is inadequate because it presents many problems for us. When we purchase groceries, we have to off-load them near the hole. We then wait for our children to bring a wheelbarrow to carry our groceries to our homes (Ecarp land dossier 2006:33).

A study by PLAAS illustrates similar conflicts about cattle-holding on game farms in other provinces (Hall 2011⁷⁸). In such cases, game farm owners do not merely convert their own forms of land-use and livelihoods; they require farm dwellers to convert too. Farm dwellers on game farms are denied access to grazing land and livestock, while game farms do not present alternative livelihood options. After Dr. Hall's presentation of this study at a government workshop on land tenure, the following discussion commenced between a conservative farming representative and the chairperson of the meeting.

⁷⁸ Presentation to the Portfolio Committee on Rural Development and Land Reform, 16 March 2011

Mr. van Zyl (TAU SA) said that there had to be more trust to build an economically stronger country, and that the land tenure legislation resulted in uncertainty, the opposite of trust. Mr van Zyl claimed that farmers ‘never ever evicted anybody’. The legislation gave rights to every person who had ever stayed on a farm, even if they were not working on the farm. On his own farm, the elderly stayed on the land and took care of the workers’ children. Sometimes, as a result of the legislation, farmers were given no choice but to ‘clean up’ their farms. Farmers did not want to put people on the street, but productive land was being put out of commission in the process of allowing people to stay on the land.

The Chairperson told Mr van Zyl that TAU SA’s presentation had indicated that the legislative scheme was robbing farmers of agricultural land, and in some cases they had no choice but to ‘clean’ their farms. He said that it was an unfortunate choice of words, and that when people took it upon themselves to tell the state that their legislation was not working, they needed to be careful how they did so. By saying that farmers had to ‘clean’ their land, he was drawing a bad parallel, one that was reminiscent of Nazi Germany.⁷⁹

The Grahamstown game farm property broker I interviewed told me there are always ways to get farm dwellers off land in a legal manner. As a property broker he does not get involved in such negotiations, but does say that he always attempts to sell ‘farms without families and complications, we call that “clean” land’ (Interview J.Flowers, 2011). His experience is that money just about always works and his advice is that if you as a buyer can get farm dwellers to sign a contract for ‘let’s say 50,000 Rand’, you should do it. If not, he warns, the case can grow into a nuisance that revisits you in a later stage when family, friends and others come to live there. ‘We sold one with a property with a land claim ten years ago. It was all fine. Then in 2005 it came back to us and gave us massive problems. Real headache material’ (ibid.).

Offering money or releasing dangerous animals and erecting fences are not the only ways to remove persons from land. Other options are attempted by game farmer Noel. Some families have lived and worked on his property since he started game farming in the late eighties. Now that tenure security is being sharpened, there are negotiations with the dwellers about their preferences. One of the options they have is to move to town and get their own house. Noel helped them to sign up for government housing, but tells me this is a frustrating and time-consuming process. Therefore he has also offered to build them a house in town, ‘nothing fancy, pretty similar to their present one’. Noel wouldn’t mind to have them stay but

⁷⁹ Notes of the Land & Tenure Rights for Farm Dwellers & Workers Meeting with Rural Development/Land Reform stakeholders & Deputy Minister, 16 March 2011

‘they don’t want to live here’. He says it does pose an issue in the case that he would want to sell his land. Farms that are not ‘clean’ can be sold, says Greg, but the land price is considerably lower. Some farmers, he tells me, see trouble with farm dwellers as a reason to apply to the land reform program and a reason to sell. When I ask him if there are any families that refuse to go, even when offered money or alternative housing, he says there are not many:

But I do know of one farm where they have fenced farm workers out completely. Their little plot is in the corner (draws farm map) and the plot is fenced with a corridor, a narrow tunnel to the road so they can get in and out: works for all (Interview P.Saunders 2009).

Authors such as Lindsey et al. (2007) do mention that wildlife farms and hunters especially have the potential to generate revenue in remote areas. Langholz and Kerley affirm this and say private game reserves (PGRs) bring in several ‘multiplier effects’ in the regional economy:

...visitors to PGRs make other direct expenditures in the Eastern Cape. These include buying crafts, staying in hotels, renting cars, flying in planes, buying petrol, purchasing clothes, visiting other attractions, and dining in restaurants (Geach 2002). Therefore, ecotourists’ true economic impact is much wider than what is spent at the PGRs. Assuming a 70% multiplier effect documented by the Namibian Department of Environment and Tourism and cited in Humavindu & Barnes (2003), the R105.8 million in revenue generated by PGRs in 2004/2005 translates into a total infusion of R179.9 million into the regional economy. Second, PGRs’ presence increases the diversity of attractions in the Eastern Cape. This encourages tourists to stay longer in the province, thus increasing their impact in the region.

The argument that game reserves pull visitors to remote places can ring true if one looks strictly at the location of hunting farms in the Eastern Cape. Hunting farms are often located much further from (international) airports and cities than ecotourism reserves are. One should be cautious however to conclude that hunting farms thus bring in additional revenue to remote areas. At the game farms I visited overseas clients were typically met at the airport by the professional hunter and transported to the hunting lodge. As one game farmer told me:

We are there waiting for them at P.E. airport and even help sort out their rifles and permits if they need us. These guys are with us constantly for their 10 or 20 day hunt, until they are back on that plane. And even then we send Christmas cards and emails and that sort of thing. That is why people come to hunt here (Interview D.Marais, 2011).

As multiple game farmers confirmed, hunters buy packet deals that include transport from and to the airport and which in most cases include all accommodation, dinners and sometimes also beverages at the hunting estate(s). Excursions can be organized of course, but the hunts take place in remote areas and hunters are dependent on the lodge owners for transportation and organisation of extra dealings. Although a lot of money is thus spent in remote areas, it is frequently done in a single transaction from client to landowner.

Abridgement

South Africa's political transition of 1994 was in many ways a breaking point with the past. A new government faced the paramount task of addressing poverty, dispossession and inequality, as well as food security and an increasing (international) call for biodiversity conservation. Landowners were forced to diversify and reposition themselves in society due to the deregulation of the market and decline of marketing boards and subsidies. As borders opened, the country was flooded with international markets, rules, ideas on nature, tourists and foreign investment. Sixteen years later, a resilient critique on service delivery and lack of (rural) transformation has grown strong and is at times apt to escalate.

This chapter looks at these developments through the lens of farm conversions to wildlife based land units. By questioning game farmers why they have converted their land or invested in game farming four important layers came to the light: 1) financial motivations that suggests converting has everything to do with profitability and sound investing, 2) safety and security reasons, 3) motivations that deal with state-led land reform programs, and 4) labour reform policy. I started out the chapter with an analysis of the deregulation of South African agriculture in the early 1990s which shows that large-scale landowners lost their position as preferred citizens who were highly subsidized, organized, politically connected, and fenced from external markets. With the political reform of Mandela's cabinet, landowners had to recalibrate their businesses as well as their position as citizens. I argue that many chose for 'biodiversification' in which landowners diversified their businesses to include new bio-entities and reconfigure existing bio-entities for production purposes in which game farming was a most popular shift. According to imprecise but popular statistics some 10,000 landowners (out of 40,000) have become game farmers while almost 90% of all farmers make some money from wildlife. This activity covers up to 16,8 % of South Africa (and a further 6.5% is utilized as public wildlife reserves) and has thereby caused vast spatial shifting and a redesign of South

Africa's surface. Most characteristically, WBLU is paired with the erection of material boundaries such as game fences which are obliged by wildlife policy to protect both the lives of humans and animals. These boundaries are particularly firm as the fences are in most cases 2,40 meters high and are in some cases fortified to prevent human contact with double electrified entry and exit gates, a minimum voltage of 5000V, 24/7 manned security, barbed wire, live wire, and fenced river access (DEDEA, 2008, p. 11). Whereas this leads to the protection of some humans, it also upsets mobility patterns of many rural inhabitants by cutting off their routes, preventing access to natural resources and work opportunities, and endangering the work of farm labourers.

The heavy security boundaries are seen to have additional benefits besides protecting expensive wildlife (see following Chapter) from escaping. It also securitizes the land against malevolent animals and humans. Firstly, predators and poachers, two renowned adversaries of farmers are barred from access. Secondly, as farm security has become an important discourse in crime-ridden South Africa, game farms provide a manner to protect oneself by means of the boundaries but also by means of different forms of ground control such as weapons, patrols and security guards. Although stock loss or rural security may not be a principal reason to convert land for game, game farms and their intrinsic security boundaries are seen as preferred business models in terms of safety. What wildlife species do, besides giving security against intruders themselves, is legitimize the erection of a conservation fortress. That is, the common game farm allows one to have vast plains, large and dangerous animals, heightened electric fences, double-fenced housing, 24/7 manned security, barbed wire, live wire, offsets, fenced river access, armed patrol guards, roads with security checks and boom barriers, as well as significant amounts of firearms which are all legally held for conservation purposes.

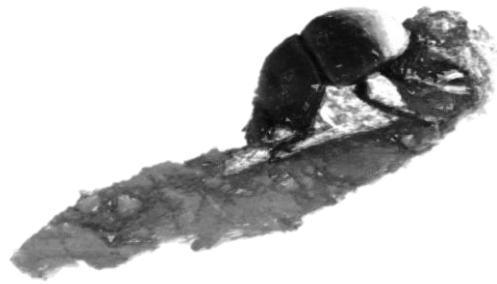
Besides physical security, security to keep one's land is also a common narrative. Most (game) farmers are on their guard concerning the current land reform programme that the government has launched. In this chapter I give a brief overview of the various pillars of land reform policy -land restitution, redistribution, tenure reform- and aim to add environmental stewardship programs to the academic agenda on land reform. I view these programs in light of game farming and conclude that land reform gives reasons for (game) farmers to opt out of the land market as well as reasons to convert from farming to game farming. The latter is the case especially because game farms have higher prices than regular farms and are therefore either less likely to be bought by the state or fetch good prices in the willing buyer-willing seller market (Such as the 1 billion rand the state paid for the Mala Mala reserve. See Joubert & Hoffstatter, 2013). Another reason is that game farms justify an entirely different blueprint

than common farms. Their layout is accepted to hide and remove ‘unwild’ elements such as houses, domesticated animals and humans from sight (see following Chapter). By creating hostile grounds for farm dwelling by adding wild animals and securitized boundaries, game farms are more easily rid of dwellers who may call upon their tenure rights to own or reside on land. Also, I argue that public private partnerships between officials from the department of environmental affairs and game farmers can lead to a stronger social and economic position for landowners. As the state is bound to international legislation which requires a lot more land to be converted for conservation reasons than the state presently can afford, state officials have devised stewardship programs. Through these programs the state can obtain their conservation goals by partnering with private landowners who agree to those conservation principles the state lays out, and game farmers can benefit by obtaining the official private nature reserve label, a more secure land position in terms of reform measures, as well as subsidies, road signs, and other state support.

Finally, the current labour reform may contribute to game farming. As farmers are increasingly competing on an international unstable market, search for manners to make their business more efficient and effective, and face heightening minimum wages, business models that are less dependent on human labour have become preferred. In a state like South Africa, which has a limited amount of government employees and resources to monitor and inspect environmental and labour regulations, this craving for cost minimalization leads to the at times illegitimate shedding of labour and foreign contracting. This has led to serious farm dweller’s abuses such as ‘on-site housing that is unfit for living, lack of access to toilets or drinking water while working, efforts to block workers from forming unions’ and subsequent large-scale strikes in the agricultural sector (Ewert, 2012; cf. Human Rights Watch, 2012). Game farming provides a business model which, especially in the case of hunting farms, tends to require less labourers than common farming. Although game farms come with different types of jobs which need more specialized labour, many labourers are paid as farm workers, a category which is not ranked high in terms of salary.

By examining these layers and delving into the social economics of land and labour a new map of South Africa emerges. Not only has a large portion of the country been redivided and converted to new types of land units, but the human-human relations in one sixth of South Africa have fundamentally been distorted because of the privatization of wildlife. To qualitatively study how social relations have altered the following chapter ventures, seemingly paradoxically, into the different roles that animal species play in wildlife based utilization. By tracking the manners in which wildlife species have been privatized and their lives are

capitalized on, the chapter gives in-depth insight into the production of wilderness and its transformation of existing social relations.



De liefde voor het dier is onvergankelijk en voor zover we ze niet opvreten is geen graf te mooi voor ze.⁸⁰

Bert Haanstra, 1972

⁸⁰ Translation from Dutch: “Our love for animals is endless and as far as we don’t eat them, no grave is beautiful enough for them”.

Chapter V A Rush of Blood

‘So what *is* a salmon?’ John Law and Marianne Lien ask in their quest to understand Norway’s salmon industry (Lien & Law, 2011, p. 66). Upon answering this question, they soon find that scientific classifications and phenotypical descriptions of Norwegian salmon do not quite suffice. To understand what a salmon is, the authors rather attempt to understand how the animal is ‘enacted’ in contemporary Norway, how human-salmon interactions are shaped. The same question should be asked regarding South African wild animals. So what *is* a wild animal? What kind of thing has South African society made a wild animal to be? Because human-nature interactions influence the proliferation, behaviour, and the morphology of animals, and vice versa nature influences the presence, behaviour and maybe even the morphology of humans, it is important to understand how these different biological bodies have developed in relationship to each other. It is important to look beyond biological descriptions and understand how wildlife is enacted as biocapital, how human-animal interactions are shaped.

The exploration of these interactions can be linked to David Harvey’s observation that natural resources are not intrinsic resources. In line with Chapter II’s theoretical skeleton, this chapter explores further the notion that natural resources only become resources through specific social appraisals (Harvey, 1974). If we look at the South African example of wildlife farming, I will show that many new commercial human-nature relations have become reality. By means of socio-technical achievements ‘noun-chunks of reality’ have been ‘cut’ from the dynamic complexity of nature and are marketized (Castree, 2003, p. 280). South African wildlife has thereby become enacted in the function of different types of biocapital. These enactments depend on technological advances, important bricks in this chapter, but also ‘on the politico-legal frameworks through which this control is exercised’, which is the theme of the following chapter (Garland, 2008, p. 61). After having focused on land and labour in the previous chapter, this one looks more closely at wild animals and their enactment (on land and by labour) into different forms of wildlife commodities.

An important boundary in wildlife commodification is drawn between lethal and non-lethal consumption of animals. Hunting for example provides clients with direct wildlife products, while ecotourism works more discretely with the politics of the picturesque and commodities of the spectacle (Büscher, Sullivan, Neves, Igoe, & Brockington, 2012; Jim Igoe, 2010). In hunting you may also be paying for the spectacle of nature, although in ecotourism one does not pay to become owner of wildlife flesh, skin or bones. At first glance it seems that non-lethal consumption is less disruptive to nature and society, although this question should

be addressed in terms of recent advancements of both forms of consumption (e.g. Neves, 2010). By making the distinction respondents classify themselves as either lethal or non-lethal wildlife producers, as the boxed field notes show.

Fieldnote

‘If you want to see something funny’, Randy says, ‘put a jeep jock in a room with a professional hunter. To add some flavour, pour in a trickle of brandy’. Randy, a ‘PH’ or Professional Hunter himself, assures me this recipe is certain to cook up a vigorous fight. Professional hunters don’t like ecotourism guides and brand them ‘jeep jocks’ because they use four-wheel drive vehicles and allegedly care more about their appearance than professional hunters. Randy explains: ‘those sissies with their bling-bling bracelets on their arms. Sitting there with a cap on and shades on top of it, what kind of sun block is that?’

Dave is a game guide in a neighbouring luxurious ecotourism reserve. When asked about professional hunters, he makes jokes like Randy’s. ‘You should see those guys, man. Those ‘boertjies’ [Afrikaans informal word for farmers] wear massive boots, long socks and then these tiny hot pants, that’s that. Man, those shorts are like a cheap hotel: no ballroom!’. Randy on the other hand remarks that jeep jocks wear girly English shorts until over their knees. These common jokes point at different appraisals of nature that exist in South Africa, appraisals which occasionally clash. Randy’s own hunting clients for instance frequently request game drives. He refuses to bring them, saying that he would never ‘point at monkeys all day’. In such case, Randy’s wife Britta brings his clients out to a neighbouring eco-reserve for game-viewing. She recalls the following story.

‘The client’s wife wanted to see ellies. We don’t have elephants, but we cater for this, no problem. We went on a game drive through Nalya Reserve and there, when they found out we were from a hunting reserve, they would not speak to us anymore. They have got this conservation centre there and this girl was so emotional about things. She was telling about overpopulation of elephants and acting all difficult about it. I knew the answer and told her right in her face: just shoot them!’

The tension between different wildlife philosophies is clear. Besides the hunting outfitter and ecotourist-operator there is also a third popular game producer though, the game farmer. Enabled by new ownership relations this producer is translating agricultural practices to the wildlife sector by managing the procreation, bloodlines, and flesh of wildlife bodies for capital gains. Mixing lethal and non-lethal methods this producer breeds, sells, transports, culls and processes wildlife into meat. Somewhat ignored in social science (which tends to focus on picturesque safari hunts and popular ecotourism), game farming has arguably become the

largest form of wildlife capital extraction. That is to say, virtually all farmers, whether they produce livestock, game or crops, have now incorporated wildlife production into their business models.

By examining the different roles animal species play in wildlife based utilization this chapter argues that the privatization of wildlife has led to intensive management and control over not only the habitats of wildlife, but also over each aspect of the lives of such animals. Whereas wildlife business was before only focused on observing the lives of animals in the wild (ecotourism) and taking their lives from the wild (hunting), it is now quickly developing methods to control wildlife reproduction and produce ‘the wild’.

The text is divided along the lines of four phases in the life of wildlife that commodities are related to, namely: sex (on breeding wildlife), life (on viewing and trading wildlife), death (on hunting wildlife) and after-death (on wildlife meat, souvenirs and trophies). I will start off with a contextual paragraph that both indicates and questions statistics on the steep rise of game farming, wildlife prices and boundary markers.

Wildlife Based Land Use and the Politics of Statistics

Although there are some leading numbers in the policy realm, when speaking of data on the wildlife industry, one must be careful. In politically sensitive settings such as South Africa’s land debate, as Scoones et al state, ‘we must reflect deeply on the politics of evidence, and its relationship with policy. Knowledge and policy are of course always co-constructed’ (Scoones, Hall, Borras, White, & Wolford, 2013, p. 470). In this case, basic statistics are not provided by government and this makes it difficult, if not impossible, to precisely say how much land has been converted, how many wildlife farms there are, or how many persons are employed in this industry. Game farms are not categorized or counted separately by government, and no central database exists to count them by this work’s definition – as land that has been adequately enclosed (or by any other definition for that matter). Certificates of Adequate Enclosure contain information on the amount of hectares and wildlife on land, but are only registered and collected by local governments and have not been centralized. An Eastern Cape local government officer told me that some districts have neatly updated all CAE’s in excel sheets, while others ‘still live in the dark ages ... the information is all there in boxes, but where ‘there’ is exactly... who knows?’ (Interview C.Mulder 2009). The lack of data leads further research questions into a *cul-de-sac*, making it problematical to assess how many people live on wildlife farms, which (quantity of) species are utilized on these lands, what the wildlife industry brings

South Africa in terms of revenue, and what the economic position of the industry is amidst other markets. As some information is in hands of government, I approached them on different levels to access data. In my case, as well as in the case of NMMU researchers I consulted, government was reluctant to cooperate. One professor told me he wished to create a statistical database together with the Department of Environmental Affairs and offered students who could assist in this work. The offer was declined as such collaboration was said to reflect badly on government. I received similar answers, but did get some information on CAE's (presented beneath) from local government officers who went out of their way to help.

| Researcher | Year | Game Farms | Amount of Land | Methodology |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|---|---|
| Carruthers, J. | 2008 | 9-10000 | 16.8% of South Africa's land | Reference to Du Toit |
| Du Toit, JG. | 2007 | 9-10000 | 16.8% of South Africa's land | Reference to NAMC |
| NAMC | 2006 | 9000 | Approximately 14 789 000 ha of 'exempted' wildlife ranches in 2005, and a total estimate of 20 500 000 ha | No reference |
| Palmer et al. | 2006 | 9000 | 17 million ha | Reference to ABSA |
| ABSA | 2002 | | 13% | No reference |
| Eloff, T. | 2002 | 5061 | 10.36 million ha | Unclear |
| Goodman et al. | 2002 | | 6.7% of northern Kwazulu-Natal | time series for a portion of northern Kwazulu-Natal |
| Watkins et al. | 1996 | 4035 | 8,093,200 ha | Deducted from small survey ARC did in 1991 |

Figure 5.1: quantitative studies on wildlife industry size in terms of land

A consequence of this shortage is that the majority of statistics are produced by industry-related researchers. Industry bodies generally do not have much research funding and, following this, data tends to be narrow. Additionally, this type of research frequently sets out to boost the wildlife industry and thereby falls short of critically addressing industry growth and possible negative social and environmental consequences. Some papers are commissioned by the industry to researchers, such as the Langholz and Kerley report (2006), the Du Toit report (2007) and the Snowball and Antrobus report (2008). Other research is done by agricultural economists and wildlife industry scholars. Scholes et al. call the existing information 'extremely fragmentary and confused. Much seems anecdotal and self-referential' (Scholes et

al., 2009, p. 4). To support this claim, I will present some of the most cited reports on the size of the industry, their statistics and methodology in figure 5.1.

The figure which has been most popular in recent years in studies (Brandt, 2013; Carruthers, 2008; Du Toit, 2007) as well as in Parliament (see box below) is an amount of 9000-10.000 game farms which use some 16.8% of South Africa's land.

QUESTION 1485, DATE OF PUBLICATION: FRIDAY 09 OCTOBER 2009 [IQP No 20 -2009]

Mr. P J C Pretorius (DA) to ask the Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries whether game farming is regarded as an agricultural activity; if not, why not

REPLY:

(1) Yes, Wildlife ranching (Game farming) was recognised as an agricultural activity by the former Department of Agricultural Development in 1987, and game is considered an agricultural product in terms of the Marketing of Agricultural Product Act 1996 (Act No 47 of 1996). Because this sector is subject to legislation administered by DAFF and Department of Water Affairs, it went through a period of uncertainty until quite recently.

Factors that contributed to a paradigm shift included the report on the Investigation to Identify Opportunities and Address Problems for Sustainable Growth and Development in the South African Wildlife Industry by the National Agricultural Marketing Council as well as the establishment of the Wildlife Ranching Association of South Africa (WRSA). Game farming is therefore seen as an agricultural activity – particularly where certain wildlife species are used as viable alternatives to more conventional livestock species. There are currently 9 600 wildlife ranches that employ 65 000 people. This excludes those employed in the tourism side of the industry and is three to four times more than the staff employed by livestock farmers

Tracking this number back validates the statement that figures on the industry's dimensions are imprecise and out-dated. The industry may be much bigger, but also it could be much smaller than presented. Statistics on the size of the industry and its generated income are important 'tools' in the engagement of industry with government however. A large industry that generates incomes, jobs and tourists cannot simply be ignored. Copious contributions to national goals such as poverty alleviation and conservation are generally rewarded and recognized through government speech, engagement and subsidies. An industry that uses a lot of land in an 'unproductive' manner and does not contribute meaningfully to rural livelihoods may face ridicule, excommunication, or corrective action.

In trying to gain a grip on the region I did fieldwork in, I pursued figures for the Eastern Cape Cacadu district in 2010. With help from the local Department of Environmental Affairs in Port Elizabeth, I analysed a register containing more than 900 Certificates of Adequate Enclosure that were given out over the last ten years and compared them to the cadastral databases. Although the provided records were updated to different dates, the mapping of CAE's seems to be the most reliable manner to study the size and amount of game farms. The keeping and trading of wildlife species or their body parts is not legal without having this certificate. All legitimate operating game farms, whether they are trophy farms, ecotourism parks, or breeding grounds thus have CAEs and the regional Department of Environmental Affairs keeps a copy.⁸¹ Scholes et al. have however noted that in those areas where there is no perceived benefit to the landowners of declaring the land use to the authorities, the records are likely to be extremely patchy (Scholes et al., 2009).

Results from the four offices that collect CAE's in the Cacadu district are in figure 5.2: 14,9 % of the total land in this district is adequately enclosed. The Cacadu district is without doubt the most populated area of Eastern Cape in terms of wildlife and game farmers, and so, the average of the province is likely to be significantly lower. According to the database of CAE's, the growth of game farm numbers and their amount of land-use since 1994 has been rocky at times, but nevertheless continues to climb. In the Cacadu districts of Graaff-Reinet, Seekoei, Grahamstown, and Swartkop, more CAEs are registered each year, and the average hectares per farm increases slightly overall. In the Grahamstown district for instance, adequately enclosed farms shot up from 112 in 2003 to 127 in 2008 and 154 in 2010, while the average hectares per farm grew from 2157 to 2343 ha/farm.

| Area | Date | Ha under CAE | Farms | Avg ha per farm |
|---------------|------|--------------|-------|-----------------|
| Graaff Reinet | 2003 | 302,901 ha | 99 | 3059,6ha |
| Seekoei | 2006 | 36,464 ha | 43 | 848ha |
| Swartkop | 2009 | 169,615 ha | 71 | 2388ha |
| Grahamstown | 2010 | 360,831 ha | 154 | 2343ha |

Figure 5.2: Adequately enclosed land in Cacadu district

A member of the national board of wildlife representatives told me:

⁸¹ This thesis focuses on wildlife farms with CAEs, where wildlife is legally privatized. The hunting and killing of wildlife can also take place on common farms that do not have CAEs. The animals on these farms remain *res nullius* and are legally classified according to common law.

Everyone said it would drop in the 80s, then after those guys [ANC] took over, again, and now they're still telling me. I can tell you: there are more game farms today than yesterday. And there will be more tomorrow (Interview P.Steyn, 2010).

Two property brokers whom I interviewed confirmed a rise in game farm sales, but both mentioned a recent shift towards mixed farms with wildlife and cattle (Interviews J.Flowers; P.Saunders 2009). Studies in the Eastern Cape Province substantiate this assertion and show that ninety percent of farms are now mixed farms, while nearly seven percent of landowners in this province have removed and replaced all domestic stock by wildlife (personal communication Prof. Van Niekerk, February 2008). Whether I travelled to the Zuurveld, Karoo, or Kei River, answers were similar. 'I don't know a single farmer around here that does not make some cash off wildlife' (Interview M.Turrell 2009). Minister Kraai van Niekerk, who has a large sheep farm himself, explains how most landowners are integrated into the industry.

Well you see, I've got 300 springboks on my sheep farm. Once every while they come with helicopters and take some out, or else they get overpopulated: that's an integral part of my farming business (interview, 2009).

Besides this, game farmers, in their search for a diverse hunting experience for their clients, lease land from farmers through so-called concessions. Game farmers may not have mountainous terrain, access to water terrain, or swamps, areas that all come with their own wilderness experience and species, and thus arrange concessions. Therefore, it is not always clear how much land a game farmer has. He may advertise 20,000 ha of hunting terrain in his brochure, while 17,000ha is under concession. What these concessions do suggest is that the wildlife industry is more enmeshed in South Africa's countryside than may be expected at first glance. Not 14,9 percent, but up to 90% of agricultural land is knotted into this business according to professor Niekerk (personal communications). This number resonates with my respondents. Jan Isaacs, a conservancy game farmer, told me for instance that he does not know a single landowner who does not 'make a buck' from wildlife (Interview J.Isaacs, 2010).

Some agricultural analysts have likened the rise of wildlife farms to the ostrich booms in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, which were followed by substantial 'busts' (Smith & Wilson, 2002). At this time, data not seem to predict a bust of any sorts soon. Some did predict South Africa's 2010 Soccer World Cup to be the pinnacle of wildlife-related activity, and suggested a rise of venues and bed sales in the run up to it. Game farmers told me

that the World Cup was not particularly good for game farmers at all however. ‘Soccer lovers don’t hunt’, was what one game farmer said, hinting at South Africa’s cultural politics of sport. Others mentioned that prices of plane tickets increased and caused many hunting clients to postpone trips, and that security at the international airports was tightened and perceived as stifling for those carrying their own rifles. Landowners I interviewed in February 2011 mentioned that the booking of hunts returned back to normal after the FIFA World Cup, a time that was also marked by a relative stabilization of the world economy.

What all statistics, including the ones presented above, seem to agree upon is that an increasingly large slice of South Africa’s land is being converted from conventional farming to so-called amenity ownership – ‘where land in current production is purchased by [...] buyers who are interested in non-developed landscapes and good views’ (Robbins&Luginbuhl 2005:27). With the decline of the quantity of farms from 57,980 in 1993 to 39,982 in 2007 and their relative increase of size, less than 40,000 land units now take up the lion share of South Africa’s countryside (StatsSA, 2007). According to the leading numbers up to a quarter of these businesses would be dedicated wholly to wildlife ranching. If this is the case, a small group of South Africans thereby owns six times more agricultural land than the approximately 1.3 million small-scale farming households who farm the remaining agricultural land (Vink & Van Rooyen, 2009).

Boundary Markers

Since this work’s defines game farms as plots that have been adequately enclosed, whatever exact number of hectares is converted, all are adequately enclosed. As Cloete et al state concerning a case study ‘the only major infrastructure required for converting the cattle farm to a game ranch is 24 km of game fences (2.4 m high), requiring an average investment of R30 000 per km, totalling R720 000 for the ranch as a whole’(Cloete, Taljaard, & Grové, 2007). Although environmental legislation differs somewhat between South Africa’s nine current provinces, generally such adequate enclosure is similar in its outline. To give insight in the types of material boundaries that went paired with these adequate enclosures (which stems from the Game Theft Act), this section technically portrays the necessary requirements for wildlife ownership in the Eastern Cape. The exercise shows how notions of wildness, space and specific animal traits are knotted together to facilitate the industry’s economic model and its excluding and including fortified boundaries. The game fencing specifications additionally demonstrate how wildlife ownership and land ownership are interlocked: those who own land

have straightforward low-cost access to wildlife, whereas those who do not own large tracts of land are hereby barred from owning and trading wildlife.

| Category | Minimum Cage Size | | Max. animals per cage |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------|-----------------------|
| | Area | Volume | |
| a) Primates | | | |
| - Up to 500g | 3 m ² | 5 | 4 |
| - 500g to 2 kg | 3 m ² | 8 | 4 |
| - 2 kg to 5 kg | 3 m ² | 19 | 4 |
| - 5kg to 10 kg | 10 m ² | 50 | 4 |
| - 10kg to 50 kg | 20 m ² | 100 | 2 |
| - Over 50 kg | 70 m ² | 500 | 2 |
| b) Cats over 50 kg | 400 m ² | - | 1 |
| c) Ungulates | | | |
| - Up to 150 kg | 2500 m ² | - | 4 |
| - Over 150 kg | 1ha | - | 4 |

Figure 5.3: Provincial Notice No. 955 of 1975 (Dated: 29 August 1975)

To start with, the Eastern Cape Department of Environmental Affairs prescribes that no CAE will be approved for areas that are less than 400 hectares (DEDEA, 2008). Furthermore, the quantity and also quality of animals is taken account: ungulates that weigh over 150 kilograms for example are deemed to have at least one hectare of land (10.000m²) per four animals (see Figure 5.3). The recommended minimum amount of land that is necessary to introduce ‘dangerous game’ (lion, leopard, hyena, serval, elephant, rhinoceros and hippopotamus) is higher, at 2000 hectares, and for these animals topography, habitat, and prey availability are to be considered. Boma (a type of livestock enclosure) feeding programs which exclude human contact, double electrified entry and exit gates, 24/7 manned security, barbed wire, live wire, offsets, and fenced river access should be added for these species (Operational Guidelines Environmental Affairs EC, 2008: 11). Hence, regulations that seem merely technical implicitly come with a particular vision of how wild property should be enacted. It is necessary to respect the various degrees of ‘wildness’ of different game species, while also erecting fences to prove the intention to physically control them.

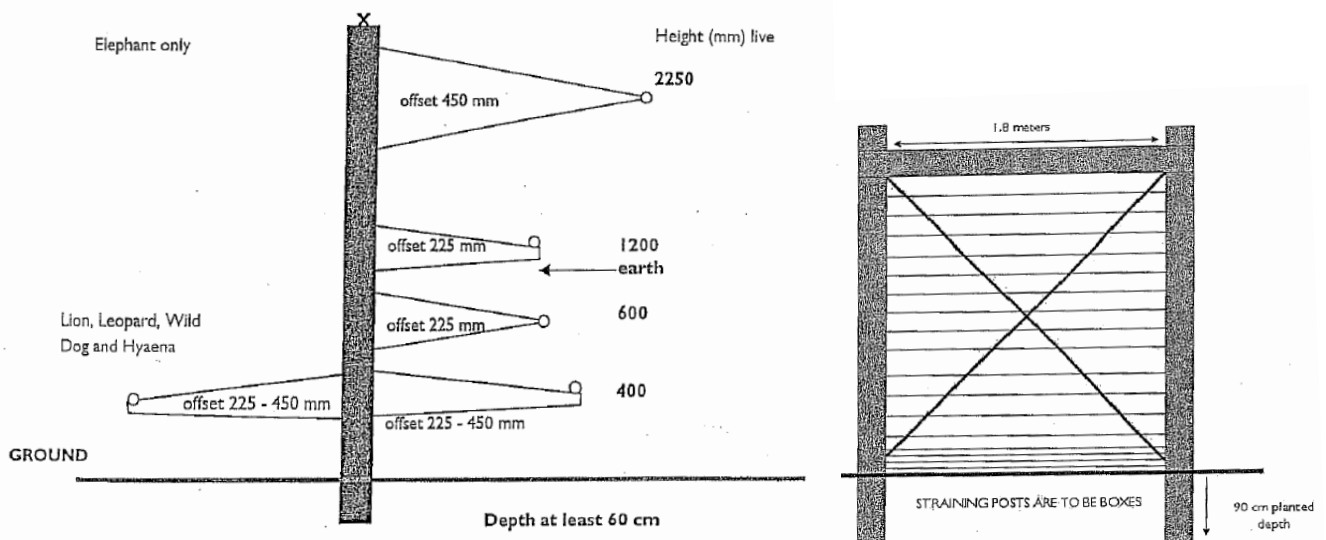


Figure 5.4: Provincial Notice No. 955 of 1975 (29 August 1975)

The height of fences is equally dependent on the species that are introduced. ‘Large animals’⁸² are grouped together under the denominator ‘Class I’ and require 2.4 meter high fences, while ‘Class II’ species require 1.4 meter high fences. It is reasoned that these particular species are grouped together because of their characteristics in relation to human boundaries, particularly their ability to destroy fences or jump over them. Amongst game farmers, ecologists and officials, there is a constant debate about the shifting of species between these categories. Many game farmers are of the opinion that the lists are not right, stating that kudu, for example, can jump over the highest fence with ease, and the springbok cannot be contained by low fences. Animal agency, or the capacity of an animal to act, has thereby become a heated ingredient of wildlife politics that serves as a proxy to optimize stakeholders’ economic interests.

A closer look at the technical fencing particulars shows something else (see figure 5.4). That is, they demonstrate how ownership regulations trigger environmental as well as social impacts. Creating rigid boundaries, class I fences must consist of at least 17 wires with boxed straining posts at 1.8 meters from each other, planted at 90 centimetres depth, with four strands of recommended electrified wire. Class II boundaries ought to be standard wire, netted stock-proof fences with optional but recommended electrification, while heightened security

⁸² The kudu, impala, giraffe, eland, cheetah, lion, leopard, spotted hyena, brown hyena, serval, elephant, African wild dog, nyala, fallow deer, sambar deer, red deer, Pere Davids deer, Indian black buck, scimitar-horned oryx, addax, sitatunga, lechwe and waterbuck (Provincial Notice No. 955 of 1975).

measures are required for Eastern Cape's dangerous game. Such animals must be kept in a compound that prevents human contact with them and has double electrified entry and exit gates, a minimum voltage of 5000V, 24/7 manned security, barbed wire, live wire, and fenced river access (DEDEA, 2008, p. 11). Besides the game farm parameters, staff housing, lodging and other facilities where humans dwell need to be fenced properly to protect persons from wild animals, particularly dangerous ones. Whereas farm houses and guest lodges are typically fenced off, housing for workers is frequently reported to be in unshielded sections of the game farm (Interviews with inspectors P.Dwabayo, T.Mashile, 2010 and see Brandt, 2013).

By marking game farms as dangerous spaces that ought to be fenced, guarded, and uninhabited, environmental policy measures which aim to defer ownership rights thus equally control the mobility of persons on land. This is illustrated by the following quote, which shows how fencing arrangements are not merely used to keep wild animals in:

On my open farm the guys poached many sheep, you won't believe it. Even kudu and springbok and whatever there is to poach... On the new farms, well, it's fully fenced so you just can't get in there. I have put up double fences with a buffer that does not contain much. In this remote area now you can't see what we have from the road, no one knows what I've got here (J.Viljoen, 2009).

Wildlife boundaries, particularly those that are intended to control dangerous game, thus serve to secure property from animal outbreaks and from human break-ins. Besides stopping intruders with malignant intentions, the erection of fences may however impact existing mobility patterns (see section 4). This applies to animal, Boone and Hobbs write that 'fences can cause to wildlife, including prevention of access to key resources, disruption to migratory routes, injury, and death' (Boone and Hobbs in Cousins et al., 2008), but also to people. Those who used the land for their own livelihoods, to travel to school, home, or work, are forced to walk around the fences. In strengthening individual property claims over animals, wildlife fences have stripped game ranch land from public functions and ring-fenced these plots off the map of commons.

Making a Buck

The Game Theft Act's financial security measures created increased individual wealth overnight. They did not only add financial value to land, as we saw in the previous chapter, they also added value to wildlife. Wildlife has become a legally protected asset that can bestow one with bank loans, credit and can securely be traded. By 'putting a price on wildlife's head', a marketing system commenced in which prices of utilizable wildlife species inflated and wildlife utilization was taken into account by financial organs. Moreover, with the opening of South Africa's border to international trade, the wildlife sector could successfully latch on to a global market of moneyed hunters who wished to fulfil their dreams of tracking African wildlife. Although some hunting ranches in the US have imported African wildlife, the African

| Year | Wildlife sold | Turnover excl. VAT |
|------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1991 | 8 292 | 8 999 871 |
| 1992 | 9 546 | 10 859 969 |
| 1993 | 11 449 | 11 732 596 |
| 1994 | 11 096 | 11 705 605 |
| 1995 | 9 171 | 14 335 894 |
| 1996 | 11 340 | 26 559 557 |
| 1997 | 12 077 | 28 526 052 |
| 1998 | 14 354 | 40 017 946 |
| 1999 | 15 455 | 53 705 823 |
| 2000 | 17 702 | 62 960 451 |
| 2001 | 17 282 | 87 000 473 |
| 2002 | 20 022 | 105 092 180 |
| 2003 | 19 645 | 102 420 445 |
| 2004 | 21 101 | 104 547 756 |
| 2005 | 17 569 | 93 549 300 |
| 2006 | 15 697 | 94 821 703 |
| 2007 | 12 084 | 91 880 192 |
| 2008 | 12 206 | 144 259 757 |
| 2009 | 14 047 | 255 158 804 |
| 2010 | 13 973 | 303 570 757 |

Figure 5.5: wildlife unit sales 1991-2010.

Source: Eloff, 2003, Nowers 2011

wildlife experience has unreplicable perquisites. Tour operators have become more accustomed to showcasing this 'spectacle' and are selling it successfully (cf. Brooks et al., 2012). A 2010 government tourism report shows that over the last decade more than sixty percent of foreign visitors from Europe and the Americas experienced wildlife-based tourism.⁸³ For these visitors South Africa, with its fine biodiversity, infrastructure, healthcare, facilitating hunting/conservation policies, lack of diseases and relative political stability, provide easy access to the fulfilment of dreams. The privatization of wildlife is by some, such as Brian Seasholes, seen as a spectacular enabler of this dream:

The creation of property rights to wildlife in southern Africa has been a stunning success story, a real win-win situation in which the landowners and wildlife have both benefited. After all, this makes sense. Property rights theory tells us that the creation of property rights tends to lead to a better world. But it is one thing to claim this in theory and quite another to see how it actually works in practice. Well, what has happened in southern Africa over the past thirty-

⁸³ Annual Tourism Report South African Tourism Strategic Research Unit, June 2010, p. 141-142

some years has likely been the biggest experiment with creating property rights to wildlife, and has not only worked, it has worked spectacularly well.⁸⁴

This thesis shows that this success story only resonates for a small selection of stakeholders, but in terms of financial valorization wildlife surely skyrocketed. Theun Eloff's 2003 study on wildlife auction price shows a tenfold increase of wildlife prices in the period 1991-2001, right after the Game Theft Act of 1991 was adopted (Eloff in Aylward & Lutz, 2003). Nowers updated this study until 2011 and shows that whereas the number of wildlife that was sold stagnated and dropped after the first decade, the turnover of wildlife sales quantified tremendously (See figure 5.5: Nowers in Van Hoving, 2011). Particularly after 2007, as the breeding and sales of rare wildlife became more popular, prices multiplied. While game farmers marvelled at the record price of 7000 Rands that was paid for a sable antelope in 1987, a buyer put down 12.2 Million Rands for such a creature in 2012 (Louw-Carstens, 2012). One game farmer says:

When my late father started with game in 1975, they were waiting for game to drop. They couldn't understand why it kept rising – just like those game ranch prices. A crash never happened, it is still growing. You might find that one of the species might decrease in price for a season or two but afterwards it will keep increasing again (Interview R.Venter, 2009).

The prices indeed kept rising, as Christie reports in the Mail and Guardian in April 2012:

The R20-million paid for a buffalo cow and her heifer calf at a game auction near Swartruggens in North West last Friday has sparked fierce debate in the booming game industry about the sustainability of prices being fetched by rare game. [...] Du Toit's staggering R146 189 870 auction turnover also included R7.25-million paid for a young buffalo bull and R5.1-million for a king wildebeest with females. Jaco Troskie, son of *The Gods Must Be Crazy* executive producer Boet Troskie, outbid Cyril Ramaphosa for the record-breaking buffalo, although Ramaphosa spent R15-million on other animals. Astounding figures have become the norm in an industry that is expected to turn over R10-billion in 2012, up from R6-billion in 2011. The previous record paid for a buffalo was R18-million at the Thaba Thola auction in 2011. The record before that was R9-million. According to Johann Vosser of Vleissentraal, the rare game

⁸⁴ From the Sixth Annual New York State Conference on Private Property Rights November 16, 2002, Albany, New York Private Conservation of Wildlife in Africa Brian Seasholes

industry is evolving ‘at breakneck speed’. ‘The easiest way to understand the change is to compare it to the cattle industry, where you have commercial animals and stud animals and the difference in price and quality is huge,’ he said. ‘Four years ago, ranch owners stocked wild animals without worrying too much about their genes, but now the drive is towards quality, towards getting your hands on the best genes possible.’ Ramaphosa, who owns Phala Phala ranch near Bela-Bela, where he breeds buffalo, black and white impala and golden wildebeest, described the growth as ‘phenomenal’. ‘We’ve seen 39% to 40% growth in the last three years,’ he said. ‘It’s a beautiful industry to be in, not only for its investment potential, but because it also serves conservation. It is the aim of every top buffalo breeder to bring back into life bulls the size of the ones that were decimated by colonial hunters in the late 1800s’ (Christie, 2012).

Besides a breeding industry worth billions of dollars, South Africa harbours the continent’s largest hunting industry which grossed a total of 973 Million Rands in species fees and daily fees alone in peak year 2008. In a presentation to PHASA in November 2010, Thea Carrol of the Department of Environmental Affairs released statistics that show the average trophy fees of the ten most expensive species in South Africa (See Figure 5.6).

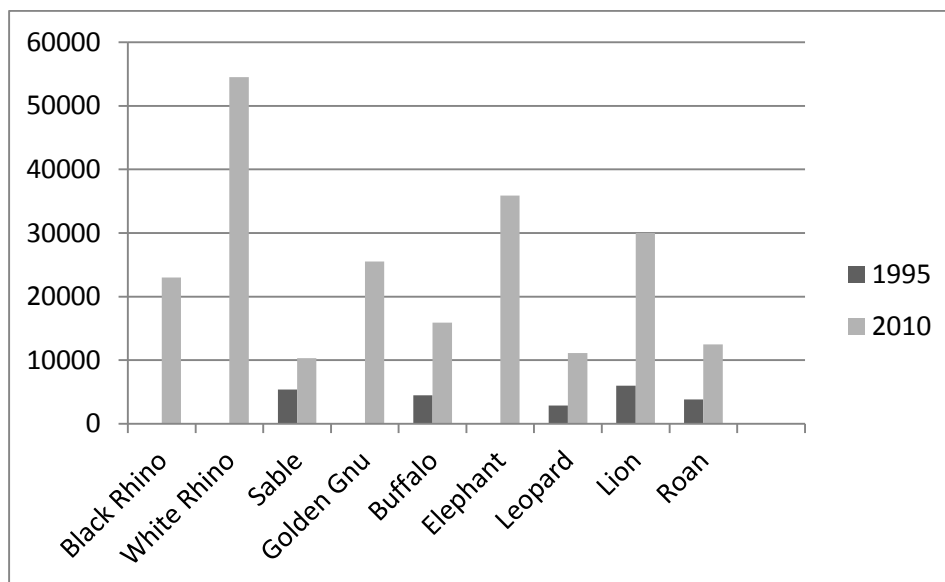


Figure 5.6: 1995/2010 comparison of the most expensive species, average prices in US Dollars. Source: Wels 2003; Carrol 2010.

These prices are far lower than the prices of breeding animals, but compared to data from 1995 hunting prices have thus increased ranging from 200% to 500% for each of these species (PHASA 1995, in Wels 2003). In addition, animals such as the elephant and rhinoceros were not included in tradable lists at this time due to their conservation status, and no publication spoke of the Golden Gnu (wildebeest), a novel wildlife industry commodity. With species

bringing in top prices, landowners are increasingly marketing their novelties at overseas clients. Driven by well-to-do tourist demands, less land is available for South Africans to hunt on. A Bedford game farmer explains:

See, the locals don't pay like overseas guys who pay 10-15 thousand US dollars to shoot one animal. Those local guys, I want to have them come over and give them animals to shoot...but If I buy kudu bulls on auctions and am paying two or three thousand rand, I can't make a buck there. That guy won't even pay me that amount to shoot. They should go and look for kudus somewhere else (Interview J. van Vuuren, 2010).

The live sale and breeding of wildlife on land is becoming increasingly popular. Especially buffalo and rare species like roan and sable are popular. 'If you look at the stock market worldwide at this stage', Harry says, 'it is not good to invest your money there'. He continues:

But if you look at buffalo and sable prices and all the others, it is expensive animals which make it very interesting for people with a lot of money to invest in those. There will be capital growth, and they will be multiplying naturally: you have got the calves and all that so your return on investment on game farming is incredible in relation to sheep or cattle farming. That is the reason it is expanding so much.

At a Wildlife Forum meeting I visited in 2011 the following slide was presented by an industry spokesman:

- 1) Asset growth with these rare species is about 86% per year and thus animals are worth more than the land in a short period of time.
- 2) Value of offspring is 100% of adult value and not taxed until sold.
- 3) New RSA - No sanctions; thus international market.
- 4) African Wildlife is unique and thus no international competitors (fieldnotes march 2011).

Compared to domestic livestock such features, or the buzz thereof, have made so-called stud-breeding particularly lucrative. To increase value, capital is laying a magnifying glass on the individual features of creatures. Instead of buying a permit to hunt simply any springbok or elephant, the trade in wildlife has begun to focus on qualities such as intercalving rates, sperm quality, fat percentage, colour, and, of course, horn size. The manners in which capital is extracted from wildlife animals is concurrently becoming more diverse. After speaking of

biodiversification as a strategy to maintain land, capital and status, it is therefore necessary to examine the on-the-ground process of market-based biodiversification.

Biocapital: Pre-natal to Post-mortem Extraction

What all forms of wildlife-based land-use have in common is that the meaning of wildlife is re-assessed and is implicitly or explicitly knotted into capitalist markets. In a relatively short span of time since the legal privatization of wildlife, and in an ongoing process, virtually each life stage and body part of the animal has thereby been scrutinized for commodification. This, the redefinition of life ‘through the contradictory processes of commodification’ is what Sundar Rajan defines as biocapitalism (Rajan, 2003, 2006, p. 87). Interventions in the life cycle, whether they are by highly technical or very traditional methods, go paired with new human-animal and human-human relations. This particularly happens in South Africa’s game conversions in which farm workers and farm managers have to learn how to relate to new species, new consumers, new landscapes, and new types of jobs. While there is a long tradition of (eco)tourism centred on the lives of wild species and their deaths and carcasses are capitalized on throughout history, an interesting shift is being made to capitalize on wildlife sex – the event that determines lives and bloodlines. In terms of revenue life and death historically provide the ultimate returns, although since legal privatization was enabled game farmers have successfully challenged this notion by developing multiple new commodities in the reproduction phase. Different wildlife ontologies can be distinguished in relation to these new enactments of nature. I will comment on the commodity types and ontologies by further discussing the phases sex, life, death, and after-death.

Sex, on the Breeding and Birthing of Wildlife

In chapter two I spoke of a new conception of the wild, as something that is produced and which blurs the traditional concept of ‘domestication’. I spoke of traditional definitions of domestication which break the phenomenon up into three different practices; the taming, breeding and confining of nature (see Chapter II). Here we will see what this blurring consists of as wildlife is being redefined as an agricultural resource. All three practices, ‘the capture and taming by man of animals of a species with particular behavioural characteristics, their removal from their natural living area and breeding community, and their maintenance under controlled breeding conditions for profit’ (Bökönyi, 1989), correspond with current practices on South Africa’s wildlife reserves. This has a lot to do with the former profession of South

Africa's wildlife utilizers: game farm managers are generally trained as agricultural specialists and/or have a background in conventional farming. These managers are accustomed with the production mode of modern agriculture and its focus on efficiency, effectivity, reduction of labour, automatization and upscaling. Therefore, they 'produce' wildlife and commonly name wild animals 'units'.



Figure 5.7: photo of Buffalo ultrascan (photo by author)

This agricultural focus became increasingly possible after the legislated privatization of wild animals and as it gained popularity, it started exerting more and more control over animal bodies. The scrutiny and encroachment on reproductional functions of these bodies followed quickly. Wildlife producers are now increasingly experimenting with wildlife breeding and are valuing unborn animals as well as the carriers thereof with the intention to 'improve' the (re)production of nature. During one wildlife auction I visited, I was eager to learn how new technology such as wildlife ultrasanning is used to sell wild animals before they are born (see figure 5.7). In this particular case a pregnant female buffalo was scanned 'live', so that potential buyers could see that the animal was indeed a healthy mother. Heather Dugmore reported in the *Farmer's Weekly* that:

Anticipation ahead of the Stud Game Breeders auction on 4 September this year was high. But it reached fever pitch when stud game buyers received ultrasound scans of sable antelope, roan antelope and buffalo. Vets had already confirmed the animals were pregnant, but the scans meant buyers could see the embryo or foetus for themselves. One of the animals scanned was a buffalo cow (Lot 152) from Mpumalanga's Kwanare Game Farm, shown to be in the early

stages of pregnancy to a renowned stud male. The buffalo's gestation period is 11 months and combined with her impressive calving dates (22/03/10; 01/03/09; 26/02/08; 07/01/07), there's every chance Lot 152 will produce another calf by March 2011. She sold for the highest price ever paid for a female buffalo – R1,75 million (Dugmore, 2010).

Veterinarians say that the ultrascan-technique comes from livestock breeding and state that 'scans excite game breeders and buyers in exactly the same way they excite livestock breeders' (ibid.). Before, these techniques were not used on wildlife, particularly because physical control over wildlife in the form of capture, holding and anaesthesia technology, were not yet developed. Now, one veterinarian reported to the *Farmer's Weekly*, it is part of a process which is all about 'production and improvement' in which intercalving periods, genetics and pregnancy are closely monitored (Dugmore, 2010). With some species game farmers are experimenting with 'embryo-flushing', in which either 'fresh' fertilized or 'frozen (cryo-preserved) eggs are placed into the uterus of females to establish pregnancy, and DNA-typing of particularly buffaloes. Before modern wildlife anaesthesia and restraining technology was developed meiosis was difficult to induce and thereby financially unpredictable. Advancements in technology, often a result of experimentation by private landowners, has brought more stability and control over these natural processes. Embryo-flushing adds a dimension of control by making it possible to circumvent natural diseases like tuberculosis, and corridor and foot and mouth disease, which are rife in high-value animals such as buffaloes. 'We've already learnt you can do embryo flushing without spreading diseases, which means you can harvest embryos from buffalo in Kruger National Park or Tanzania and transfer them to clean buffalo, thereby achieving a much greater distribution of genetics,' says Dr Morné de la Rey (ibid.). With diseases making the production of wildlife uncertain to impossible in specific regions of South Africa, the technique of embryo flushing, in which both embryos and semen can be disinfected and washed to kill viruses, can lead to new opportunities.

Besides aiming for disease-free animals, breeders try to breed those species and improve those animal features the market has interest in. It is clear that visitors of game reserves rank certain species above others (Gehring & Ruffing, 2008; e.g. Harllee, Kim, & Nieswiadomy, 2009), but most wildlife features and rankings are derived from big game hunting narratives. Through hunter's narratives the most 'brave' or 'dangerous' species are judged to be the most formidable species and accordingly, the five most difficult species to hunt on foot - the African elephant, Cape buffalo, lion, leopard, and rhinoceros - have been coined as the earlier mentioned 'Big Five'. These species are not only the summit of

contemporary ‘African safari hunting’, they also are must-haves for ecotourism reserves, documentaries on African wildlife and even public parks. They are the most valued species in game auctions (see table 5.2), although other species follow close behind (partially because of the export and conservation restrictions for Big Five species). They are not the most hunted species though, those are ungulates; in South Africa springbok, impala, blesbok, kudu and blue gnu lead the numbers lists (Carrol, 2010). As the hunting taxonomies are confined to the legally accepted lists of huntable species, there is a political scuffle between the wildlife industry and environmental affairs officers about the amount of species that can be hunted and in which region (see following chapter). What can be said is that the industry has booked ample success: with 60 mammalian species - including all of the Big Five - South Africa boasts the highest number of huntable species in the world (see Damm, 2005).

This has implications for breeding practices. Breeders especially focus on producing and/or improving huntable species and their trophy features. With most species the horn is the trophy feature and its size determines the animal value.⁸⁵ The Professional Hunter, who separates ‘good animals’ from ‘inferior’ ones by making a ‘trophy call’, professionalizes this discrimination. The credo in the trophy judgement is generally straightforward: the bigger the better. What ‘bigger’ means and how ‘bigger’ is measured depends on the trophy record-system that one adheres to. These record-systems are captured in sizeable journals that provide taxonomies of huntable species and exhibit what animals with what horn size have been shot where and by who. These record books are social constructions of value with deep historical roots. The century-old Rowland Ward and the increasingly popular American Safari Club International systems are ‘the best known, most widely used, and most appropriate to the African hunting scene’.⁸⁶ The two systems have similar ambitions, but use slightly different rules to administer slightly different animals (see following chapter). Going by these books only a small percentage of animals is trophy-worthy, although due to breeding practices animals are now more and more bred to have trophy-size horns. Hunting advertisements as the following have become common:

Trophies on offer include kudu of 55" and more, Sable of 40" and more, Roan of 28" and more and excellent Buffalo. Visit Nuutbegin soon for the best wildlife breeding genetics available.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Tusks, body length and weight are measured in hornless species such as crocodiles, hogs, elephants and rhinos.

⁸⁶ Excerpt from Chapter seven of the Professional Hunters’ Course Guide Book of the Eastern Cape Game Management Association Academy of Professional Hunting

⁸⁷ Advertisement on www.nuutbeginsafaris.com, accessed in August 2013.

The horn size hereby determines the price of the animal, with each inch adding a couple of hundred dollars to the total price (see figure 5.8). Because the technology of wildlife anaesthesia and translocation has developed tremendously over the last few decades it is now becoming popular to import related species from different regions of Africa in which they have developed larger horns. With a scandal involving Zambian sable antelopes and implicating South Africa's Minister of Agriculture, it became publicly clear that the

| Species | Price in US Dollars |
|----------------|---------------------|
| Kudu 46" - 50" | \$ 2000.00 Each |
| Kudu 50" - 52" | \$ 2400.00 Each |
| Kudu 52" - 55" | \$ 2800.00 Each |
| Kudu 55" - 58" | \$ 3000.00 Each |
| Kudu 58" - 60" | \$ 3500.00 Each |
| Kudu > 60" | \$ 4000.00 Each |
| Sable Antelope | \$ 330.00 per inch |

Figure 5.8: Prices of Trophy Species (advertisement Nuutbegin august 2013)

import of rare species from abroad is an industry worth millions of Rands. Although the DoA's director of animal health had confirmed that there was 'an embargo on the importation of hoofed animals from Zambia' 153 sable were caught in the Kafue National Park in Zambia and sources close to the minister tried to smooth the way for the irregular importation of these antelopes (Ntsaluba & Brümmer, 2010).

Besides imports of favourable subspecies, there has been a proliferation of importing exotic wildlife species to South Africa. The popular proverb, which says there are no tigers in Africa, now no longer rings true. Tigers are imported, bred, hunted, shot, made into trophies and exported. According to CITES South Africa exported 19 tigers 'trophies', 7 tiger skins, 2 tiger bodies and 151 live tigers from 2007 – 2011.⁸⁸ In the footsteps of big game hunters like Theodore Roosevelt and Frederick Selous, hunters have come to see themselves as collectors of species, who strive for complete taxonomies. This urge to collect has in many cases been used as scientific legitimization of hunting. Recently, a museum in Cape Town asked Peter Flack, a big game hunter, to donate his collection of trophies for their educational scientific exposition. It consists of 'over 300 taxidermied specimens, of which over half are full mounts and includes every game animal in Africa currently available on license, with the exception of nine animals comprising mainly forest duikers (P. Flack, 2013, personal website). Breeding species defies this list of 'game animals on license' and what one sees currently is that the list of huntable species is expanding by means of hybridization, splitting, and cross-breeding. This creates new

⁸⁸ See <http://www.unep-wcmc-apps.org/citestrade>, consulted in July 2013.

species which may appeal to collectors, while at the same time leads to obscurity in terms of environmental protection laws. The golden gnu provides a good example (see box).

Fieldnotes

Amina game reserve is situated approximately 150 km north of Pretoria and has a sign saying: ‘We have Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment procurement recognition, so you can score BEE points!’ (referring to the affirmative action program of the Republic). The area has many Black Wildebeest, or gnus, of which the Department of Environmental Affairs has stated that they should not occur there. They are invasive to this region, plus these animals are virtually extinct according to government, something the private wildlife industry contests. Because of these official classifications permits to hunt the animal are more difficult to obtain (and prices have dropped, although it is difficult to establish a causal relation between these two occurrences). By crossing and selectively breeding blue gnus Hannes of Amina game reserve has found a loophole to dodge legislation and increase his business opportunities. A new type of animal is the result, which is attractively marketed as the golden gnu because of its yellow-gold color. Both conservationists and game breeders have different opinions on new species like the golden gnu with breeders saying they are natural occurrences that are artificially selected and isolated, and conservation officials speaking of selective cross-breeding programs. In any case such breeding programs are unwarranted if one wishes to have official conservation status for one’s land, but it can be attractive for collectors who seek exclusive hunts. Golden gnus are unique niche commodities that one can sell to hunters, ecotourists and other game breeders for high prices (see table 5.2; the golden gnu has become one of the top selling species in South Africa). Furthermore, the owner reckons, new species like the golden gnu may not be recognized by policy, including a possible evasion of the Alien and Invasive Species legislation. As a reaction to this type of breeding program official conservationists issued a paper stating that this sort of breeding for trophy purposes can ‘lead to undesirable levels of inbreeding or, still worse, hybridization of subspecies; significant impacts on the habitat can be caused by the introduction of undesirable invasive or alien game taxa and deliberate modification of indigenous vegetation; and in general, unregulated relocation of animals can have a variety of other unfortunate consequences’ (K. C. D. Hamman et al., 2005) .

Cyril Ramaphosa, South Africa’s vice-president, found the idea of breeding golden gnus very appealing. He officially joined breeders such as Hannes, providing them with BEE-credits, and set up the Stud Game Breeders association. Ramaphosa mentioned that he is ‘committed to making a difference by facilitating transformation in South Africa by joining the game breeding industry and by preserving and enhancing the superior genetic pool SA has in the world’ (Farmer’s Weekly, 2010). More recently however, Ramaphosa has had to tone down his

connection to the wildlife industry as he was publicly grilled for making a bid of 18 Million Rand for a male buffalo. ‘Yes, I did put a bid and that was a mistake on my part. It was a mistake; I regret it. It was a mistake to even put up my hand to do so, and I’ve been chastised by some of my good comrades. Even before they chastised me I did admit that that was a mistake. I regret it because, I mean, it’s an excessive price in the seas of poverty... it was one of those moments when I was blind-sighted,’ Ramaphosa said (Munusamy, 2012).

Prices are still on the rise for stud breeding and cross breeding has not ended. Besides golden gnus I encountered golden blue gnus, white elands, chocolate impalas, white and yellow blesboks, and white, black and copper springboks (sold as a ‘grand slam’) to mention just a few of the endless ‘new species’.

Theatres of Life, on the Viewing and Trading of Wildlife

After the monitored and controlled birth of either existing or novel high-value species, the animals are generally not set free into the wild or let loose in large compounds. Because they are too high-value to expose to risks, they lead monitored and controlled lives. Game farms, whether they are eco-tourism reserves, breeding or hunting grounds, therefore mostly consist of distinct breeding spaces. One area is open to the public and consists of a relatively extensive wilderness area in which animals can be viewed and hunted with either cameras or rifles. The other compound is where breeding species start their lives and is significantly smaller. In terms of space they usually do not exceed the amount of hectares that are officially required by the conservation department. There are species that leave these camps after some months, although high-end species such as buffaloes can stay in these camps permanently for breeding purposes. The vegetation and diets of these breeding animals are closely managed in these compounds, which often includes rotation schemes by means of which animals are constantly moved to those paddocks where forage growth is at its peak. In these spaces, but also in the general wildlife area extra feeding such as lucern is provided for harsh times and salt and mineral licks as well as power-food are distributed. The composition of species and herds is carefully planned out to avoid competition, stress and particularly predation. Most of the respondents in the Eastern Cape carefully implement medical treatment schemes, which may involve injections, de-worming and medicines (sometimes added to salt-licks) to improve wildlife’s wellbeing and value. A common practice to prevent lyme disease is tick treatment, which needs little personnel: ‘we use these little dipping boxes so the animals can dip themselves for all the ticks’ (Interview J.Viljoen, 2010).

Game farms are thus promoted for conserving wildlife, landscapes, healthy skies and solemnity, while they are operated in an increasingly intensive manner by means of pest control, scheduled inspections, security regulations, feeding supplements, and with facilities for hordes of tourists. Many facets of the industry are moving towards modern agricultural practices, while marketing aims to present pre-modern pristine natures that remain untouched by humans. That is, images of 'Wild Africa' summon certain types of wildlife species. Cows, sheep, chickens and pigs are not amongst these, while the Big Five are. An article by Graham Kerley complains that safari tourists only appreciate and desire to see 'a small proportion of vertebrate biodiversity, favouring the so-called charismatic megafauna exemplified by the Big Five' (Kerley, Geach, & Vial, 2003). Similarly, Neves remarks that natural branding may give the appearance that wildlife tourists come to appreciate animal's whole eco-systems, while in fact most viewings and hunts are staged in such a way that important parts of the ecosystem remain hidden (Neves, 2010) or are excluded. Ecotourism reserves cater for this narrow desire by stocking up on the illustrious Big Five species, while topping their reserves with 'extremely rare', or 'highly endangered' species (although there are exceptions who stress the diversity of game reserves explicitly). The introduction of these species however is not always favourable to the landscape. One respondent, the wildlife manager of a large ecotourism estate, told me: 'It's very difficult to marry the financial and the ecological side. Ideally for tourists you would have a massive elephant population here, but ecologically it's not going to work' (Interview S. Williams, 2009). Another eco-estate ranger told me that elephants were starting to flourish in his reserve but with that started to 'thrash the whole place' (Interview C. Jooste, 2009). He wondered what to do with these animals as they have a no-hunting policy on the property and elephants are difficult to sell. He is currently experimenting with anti-conception to hold sway over his elephant herd. What he pointed out is that megafauna involves considerable organization, management, landscape planning and paperwork, besides being expensive to obtain and maintain.

A more tense relationship between wildlife and game ranchers is posed by predators. Predators are generally attractive to visitors, but they pose a risk to other wildlife species. Jan Fourie, manager of a large hunting property in the Karoo tells me there is 'no way' that he will release any predators on his property: 'They will clobber all my springboks!'. The almost extinct carnivorous African wild dog is for this reason hardly ever seen on private game reserves. Williams once introduced a pack of these canines, but this is now reflected upon as a mistake: 'We introduced wild dog here but the place is too small and it killed so many animals' (Interview S. Williams, 2009). Whereas hunting farms may be more able to attract visitors

without having these destructive animals on their property, ecotourism farms feel they have no choice but to stock some of them. The role of tourist expectations and capitalism play a great role here:

When it comes to predator numbers, it's tricky because the game must be able to sustain the predators and that is a very fine balance. I have to admit we manage according to tourism. For instance, introducing leopard to the place, we have to make sure the tourists see it... I think this is the big difference between private nature reserves and national game parks; national parks get subsidised by government, we are the opposite, we pay tax so if the financial side don't work, we are going to fall apart (Interview S.Williams, 2009).

Elusive big cats and their trophy pictures are much sought-after by tourists. Ecotourism farms therefore apply certain forms of domestication to these species (and others) to keep them profitable. On one game drive three cheetahs came up to the vehicle I was in and curled around the vehicle while one gently fondled a wheel with its head. The scarce encounter with such animals proved memorable moments and photographic highlights for all passengers. The beautiful strangeness of three large felines, which have notoriously unseen lives, approaching a vehicle full of humans and even touching it was recapped as a unique highlight of the day. After discussing the incident with the wildlife manager it became more clear to me how game farms intend to arrange human-wildlife experiences in such a way that they seem unique while not being scarce. 'We spent a lot of time setting up cameras and seeing where they are, some have radio transmitters because it doesn't make sense if we have animals that kill other animals and there is no value back from them', he explained. Land which is converted for wildlife utilization is no less measured in Rands per hectare than farm land is. This may (intentionally) be concealed whilst on a bumpy ride in a Land Cruiser, but cannot be neglected by the business operator. The experience of a game drive is thereby carefully constructed as a privileged chance to meet and greet Africa's natural species in their own home, while the planning and layout of the business requires this series of meetings to be stage-managed from beginning until end. For this reason the most charismatic species in the world (which are legally allowed to be kept on South African game reserves) are introduced and coached to perform wildness in front of humans in such a way as to increase financial rewards to landowners. That is, the animals are intensively monitored, frequently hand-reared and rewarded for approaching humans and their vehicles.

To make these non-human actors stand out, much attention goes to the decorum of nature reserves. The way game farms are constructed has a lot to do with what David Hughes and William Wolmer have called an 'imaginative project'. Both authors have written on Zimbabwe and argue that, from settlement onwards, white Zimbabweans have turned to African landscapes and away from Africans (Hughes, 2010; Wolmer, 2007). This perspective is manifested in cultural representations of the land such as in poetry, books, and paintings. Hughes suggests this mental project has led to the creation of artificial landscapes that reconcile with the myth of wild Africa (Hughes, 2010, p. 11). The physical removal and replacement of (human) species and artefacts from land hereby goes paired with the imagination of a landscape in which nature is processed as an aesthetical commodity (Wolmer 2007:9). This imaginary project seems to be engrained in the architecture of the South African game reserves I visited and features strongly in their (digital) branding. Game farms are enclosed by solid game fence boundaries, but they characteristically remove all farm roads, windmills, sheds, internal fencing, irrigation means, housing and people (from sight at least) to fulfil the myth of a wild Africa without borders, without nation-states, which belongs to nobody. The paradox is clear. On the one hand game farms exhibit openness, wildness and freedom, while on the other hand the landscape requires intense control, planning, and exclusivity.

Eastern Cape game farms provide an excellent case study to study the imaginative project that envisions wild and unspoilt Africa. The Eastern Cape is the third most populated province of South Africa with 6.7 million inhabitants and a population density of over 100 persons per square mile,⁸⁹ but its game farms are branded as landscapes that are 'vast', 'infinite' and have spectacular views of endless nature. A South African travel writer named Bridget Hilton-Barber remarks that this marketing has started to bore: 'all places are uniquely located and superbly positioned; views are always breathtaking, panoramic, magnificent or splendid [...] the surroundings always tranquil or pristine' (Hilton-Barber, 2007). Seen in light of Hughes' imaginative project however, the material is intriguing. Some examples from the Eastern Cape:

Shamwari is about conserving a vanishing way of life and is the realisation of one man's dream, and the success of many people's passion. Steeped in pioneer history, and dating back to the time when a multitude of game roamed wild and free, the 25,000 hectare reserve boasts five

⁸⁹ Statssa 2011 Mid-year population estimates. The population density is likely to be highest in the former Homeland areas on the Eastern Coast, although I did not find a statistical breakdown in terms of population density on a district level.

eco-systems, thus enabling the support of many forms of plant, animal and bird life (Shamwari brochure 2009).

Connect with the majestic herds of the South African Bushveld and feel the heartbeat of nature in a landscape that boasts five of the seven biomes, namely savannah, grassland, thicket, fynbos and forest (Pumba brochure 2009).

This is your chance to be privileged enough to see the world famous African animals close up in their own habitat. The focus of the game drives is not only the large majestic beasts but also the humble smaller mammals, birds and insects which will leave you in awe (Amakhala brochure 2009).

Historian Keith Thomas mentions that the pull of wild nature is to be recognized as an essentially anti-social emotion (S. K. Thomas, 1983, p. 268). In their contradiction of the sociality of the off-stage, this emotion is undeniably branded as a pull-factor for commercial wild natures. In the South African context the anti-social promise is habitually mixed with emotions of nostalgia. Shamwari is a leading example in this sort of marketing by promising ‘colonial experiences’ in settler homesteads. Noteworthy in this respect is that the ecotourism reserve was an agricultural farm before 1990 when it was established. By amalgamating surrounding farms it grew from 1200ha to 25,000ha since then, winning numerous conservation and tourism awards along the way. This reminds of Onneweer’s quote, that ‘obviously there are large machines, but once they have gone nothing is left to remind of the previous landscape’ (2009: 57). Due to the ‘intrinsic forgetfulness’ of new natures it is quickly forgotten that there ever was a previous landscape that bustled with human activity. Brooks gives an example of this as she recounts a group of 14 Dutch scientists visiting a fenced game park in 1938 whereby the head described it to be ‘as nature made it, and as not having been spoilt by the hand of man’ (Brooks 2001:420).

Sonja Britz remarks that Shamwari has now renamed its original farm houses to be ‘manors’, thereby leaning on images of bygone manorial times in which legal and economic power was vested in a lord who was supported by local peasants (Britz, 2007, p. 213). Njabulo Ndebele recognizes this ‘enjoyment of colonial leisure’ and argues that whereas these social spaces used to be an extension of white South African’s power, they nowadays offer an escape for moneyed elites to (re)gain a sense of supremacy. Here, he says ‘everything...is still in place...the faceless black workers, behaving rather meekly, who clean the rooms, wash the

dishes, make the fire' (Ndebele, 2007, p. 101). Besides Shamwari, many other game ranches in the Eastern Cape speak of 'gracious, colonial-style safari lodges', 'Hemingway's safari experience', or a 'bygone era of colonial style luxury' (fieldnotes 2011). Louise Green is struck by the awkward term 'colonial' in these types of texts, which is used in an aesthetic manner and seems void of historical connotations (Green, 2010, p. 294). On the one hand game reserves thus wipe away years of history and a myriad of meanings the land had by being silent about recent land-use. On the other hand they recreate fictional narrative bridges to connect them to a nostalgic colonial past of splendour and wilderness. What remains is what Žižek calls 'colonialism without colonialism'⁹⁰ and what Rob Fletcher describes as partial amnesia in which optimistic, even heroic, aspects of exploration are emphasised and 'the economic exploitation and violent subjugation that were quite often the express motives (and underlay the financing) of the colonial encounter' are downplayed or ignored (Fletcher, 2012, p. 430).

Staged Wilderness

The way one travels through the 'theatres of life' is one of the most important aspects of the wilderness experience. There is a difference in blueprint here between hunting and ecotourism reserves. With a business model that requires more visitors and more cars, ecotourism reserves generally have more roads than hunting reserves. These tarred and untarred roads tend to be well maintained but nonetheless the preferred mode of transport is an all-terrain four-wheel drive. The game drive vehicles usually do not have solid roofs and have elevated seats fitted in to endow passengers with the sensation of having unmediated contact with nature. One does not usually drive him/herself around, as can be done in public parks, but is driven by a guide. The game drivers offer infotainment related to nature. They recount natural facts and often wrap them in jokes and jest. A game guide named Dave Chris for instance tells us about the balloon-shaped seeds of the Kapok Bush and is quick to add its nickname 'Old Man's Balls'. He tells us about the white rhino whose name is the result of a language mix-up (the Afrikaans word for wide, 'wijd', is pronounced as white) and points out the physical differences between the two rhino subspecies.

To enhance the decorum game drives are preferably arranged around the sun's appearance early in the morning and its disappearance in the late afternoon. Some authors have evaluated this experience of driving over dusty sunny roads in terms of colonial fantasies of

⁹⁰ Žižek, 'Passion: regular or decaf?', In These Times, 27 February 2004, at <http://www.lacan.com/zizek-passion.htm>.

conquest (e.g. Green, 2010, p. 292). The experience conjures with classical images of wild and disordered landscapes. The roads in private nature reserves are constructed across the land, but seem to lead nowhere. Winding and carving in loops and bends they do not offer the quickest route from a given point A to a given point B. The layout of a game reserve somewhat resembles a zoo or theme park with areas having names as 'Simba's rock', or 'Buffalo valley' to indicate the possible presence of certain species. The attractions here are not rides or cages (although some areas with predators or high-value creatures are fenced off) but both movable and unmovable entities of nature. The immovables, such as mountains and trees and rivers, are encircled by roads which widen at waterholes and feeding grounds. The uncertainty of seeing the movable main actors creates the ride thrill. The combination of being driven through nature in a four-wheel drive along winding roads at a slow speed leads one to experience a sense of being lost in time and space. The disoriented wandering through the wilderness labyrinth serve to make the land seem larger than it is, and contributes to the romantic image of wild and vast African plains. Game guide Dave boasts: 'I can drive you around here for days without you noticing that it is the same property' (Interview D. Chris, 2011).

Although I observed earlier that a void landscape seems the blueprint for game reserves, this does not mean there no building artefacts are constructed in the new landscapes. Many artificial features are placed in the landscape such as artificial water pools, feeding grounds, breeding camps, crops, (electrified) fences, road systems and salt blocks, which generally serve to induce certain human-animal interactions. Facilities such as restaurants, lodges, housing for workers lookouts, receptions, parking lots and swimming pools are added to accommodate visitors and are seen as value-adding investments. The planning of all these edifices is done carefully as to fashion the 'myth of the empty land' (Marks, 1980) and simultaneously provide comfort for visitors. Wildlife reserves are thereby divided into different types of spaces such as tourist space, wildlife-viewing space, breeding space and worker's space. The relationship between these spaces is vital and can be described in terms of front-stage and back-stage (Goffman, 1959) spaces. The front is 'that part of individual's performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance' (ibid, p.22). This is the carefully planned safari decorum that is teeming with wildlife, and safari props such as land rovers, rifles, dirt tracks and no humans, while providing (luxury) accommodation and supervised excitement. Here the observers, the visitors, observe the standard elements of social performance, used again and again by actors in their interactions with others. These 'fronts' are generalizable and transferable to past experiences and typical images.

In the planning of game reserves it is the intention to make the front stages as large as possible. Heightened viewpoints, strategically placed roads - which are placed far enough from other roads so that visitors do not see them (and each other), while close enough as to maximize the frontstage -, fences, the clearing or placement of trees, and water holes aim to facilitate this. Roads and vehicles tend to steer clear of cattle, fences, housing, agricultural artefacts, people and anything else that reminds one of other humans. These features are carefully managed to be either off stage or, at least, backstage if they are necessary for the theatre play.

The backstage is that space which is not accessible for the audience, but accessible for performers. Here professional hunters, guards, workers and managers (one may add animals) can be 'out of character' in the sense that they need not perform for the audience, but still play a role toward other actors. The challenge of the game farm, with its massive front-stage is to keep the backstage off-limit and hidden for spectators.

Besides front- and backstage Goffman distinguishes the outside or off-stage, where individuals are not involved in the performance. This is where actors can meet actors and perform relationships, which are unrelated to the game reserve. The stage is defining, especially in a tourism context in which exclusivity ranks high, because it delineates what the game reserve is not. One could argue that the game reserve aims to contradict the off-stage, the world outside the reserve, with its modernity, the hustle and bustle of daily lives, stressful jobs, urban discomforts, poverty and crime, social pressure, survival strain, and absence of exotics such as megafauna. Relieving these worries is the objective for many reserve managers and they design their spaces to facilitate such new temporary worlds. MacCannell elaborates on Goffman's work in relation to the tourism sector and argues that tourist operators such as reserve managers aim to 'stage authenticity' by presenting front- and backstages (MacCannell, 1973, 2008a, 2008b). Tourists, MacCannell writes, seek for authenticity and try to peel away the layers of staged authenticity by physically or discursively searching for the back- or offstage. MacCannell himself however, as Fletcher points out, aimed to 'collapse the distinction between true and false, authentic and inauthentic, entirely' (Fletcher, 2012, p. 435).

In liminal zones, such as the backstage and especially the offstage, which are to a lesser or no extent subject of designed control (by the land manager, owner or actor), images often do not fit. Whereas front stages are established, in the offstage visitors can be exposed to scenes that are complex and sometimes risk bursting the fictional bubble of the theatre. To avoid visitors from seeing things that contradict the spectacle, such as densely populated agricultural lands, electricity masts, poverty, inequality, highways and other features of modern times, many game reserves therefore attempt to manage and control liminal zones such as the offstage

entrance road to reserves. Green borders are erected to hide townships, or new roads are created to groom one for the new world. Dr. Nustad describes this process of ‘hiding humans’ in a public park setting in Kwazulu Natal:

The proposal lists ‘conservation bottom lines’ as (1) the pulling back of unauthorised agriculture from the sensitive wetlands and estuary areas on the east and south of the Dukuduku forest and the financing and erection of a fenced boundary with the Park and (2) the maintenance of a green belt between the proposed settlement and access road to the World Heritage Site area. Asked about the green belt, the project manager explained that this was meant to hide the Dukuduku settlement from view of the tourists driving into the World Heritage Site. Tourists do not want to see poor people when they drive into a conservation area. Conservation nature is created as a managed absence of people, hidden behind lush vegetation. In the park itself this nature is continued: a landscape populated by animals and emptied of people (Nustad, 2011, p. 106).

Borders that separate the game reserve from the outside world, and boundaries between front and back stages inside the reserve, are thereby key features of game reserves. Important is their management, or the border-control, as considered by Victor Turner, which provides persons with information on how to perform where and when and leads to processes of inclusion and exclusion (Turner, 1987). These borders and their control are not only upheld physically on game reserves, but also (necessarily) feature in marketing.

Whereas most landowners were once family run businesses, now, with large capital injections that are necessary to build multiple lodges, release charismatic species, and market a ‘wilderness experience’, game farms are often managed and owned by (overseas) investors (Andrew et al., 2013). Although it is difficult to trace who the owners of game reserves are, some owners as well as an Eastern Cape provincial official with a 25 year track record in wildlife farm inspections, stated that the big reserves are virtually all supported by international funders and can only survive in the long term because of this (Interview D.Grobler, 2009). Being tied into an international market from the root, the act of running a farm changed altogether. In the Karoo, a game farmer told me that marketing has become the core of his business. ‘It’s a different ball game altogether: a farmer has to work hard on his land from sunrise to sunset. The game farmer is different; he needs to be good at getting rich guys to his land’ (Interview L.Pienaar, 2010). Although Mr Pienaar did not imply that game farmers need not work hard, he did suggest a certain detachment from the land. Opposed to getting one’s

hands dirty, investing in internet marketing, creating appealing package deals, branding and developing spectacular images have become new-fangled and indispensable elements of the game farm. As I found out when searching for game farms, the digital realm has indeed become one of the main fields to sculpture one's sceneries. To avoid ecotourists from being confronted with pictures of hunted animals, I found that some farms are digitally branded multiple times. Eastern Cape Safaris for instance is a typical hunting website offering hunts on an 'excess of 30 species of game'. Sisba Game Reserve is an ecotourism reserve on which one can go on horseback safaris, hiking activities, abseiling and have game drives 'among more than 30 species'. Scrutiny shows both to pinpoint the same land plot and owner. Game farms and their boundaries are thereby made to be read in different manners by different people at different times (Onneweer in Carrier & West, 2009). This happens virtually, as is the case with the different websites, but also on the ground. A wildlife fencing boundary with warning signs may be a sign of good practice for fencing inspectors, an indication of the limits of the nature reserve for animals, while providing neighbouring community members with a sense that they are unwelcome.

Death, on Hunting the Wild

Many respondents told me that hunting is a 'white' South African cultural activity that ought to be protected as cultural heritage. In a report on the rise of wildlife ranching Dr. Du Toit writes that 'the culture of the Boer is to hunt' (Du Toit, 2007, p. 56). Scholes et al. do not strictly speak of hunting in an Afrikaner context, but do present culture and lifestyle as a motivation for land-owners to shift to wildlife ranching (Scholes et al., 2009). Sometimes this culture or lifestyle is defined as an urge for recreation; an escape from society by interacting with wildlife. Game farmer Riaan Venter for instance says:

It's great for leisure! Guys who feel like emigrating on a Friday afternoon, feel like a new person by Sunday evening. They went to their game farm, maybe even as a tourist to another man's farm, and just enjoyed the weekend in the bush. On Monday they are strong and can continue their job again.

Some narratives defined this type of bush-culture as a tradition. At the professional hunting course I attended, it quickly became apparent I was the only person that had not shot rifles in his early youth. Each aspiring professional hunter or game farmer had his own story about

growing up with wildlife and guns. They had stories about 'braais' (South African for barbecues) under the stars, the shooting of their first springbok, and about risky encounters with paciderms and predators. Wildlife-related products such as trophies, skins and weapons have come to be important cultural artefacts that carry stories and are passed on from generation to generation. It is not uncommon to hear stories which are set in nature and that mark seminal (sometimes spiritual) moments in the becoming of age. And, particularly in Afrikaans communities, hunting, conservation, and the appreciation of wildlife have been written into identity stories on the Afrikaner culture and its origins (see for example Carruthers, 2005, 1994).

Just like animals, photographs and rifles, these narratives are a vital part of the world of hunting. At professional hunting school we were taught how to tell such stories at campfires and in front of groups of clients. Local hunting magazines promulgate them weekly and add stories by experienced hunters as well as by newcomers in the practice such as women, children and celebrities. The stories below are some of the first stories I encountered and, not being from my hand, give a suitable insight into the intriguing world of game hunting. Two Americans who travelled to Southern Africa and won a local industry-related hunting story competition with these stories write them.⁹¹ The first excerpt presents a conventional, adventurous story, which details the hunt from the eye of the beholder. It focuses on a symbolic match between the hunter on the one side and the calculating hunted, a blesbok, on the other side.

... We crab-walked slowly over the rise of the hill. We could not get close. These animals can run all day like the wind. They ran all day. We did not get close enough for another shot. The sun was beginning to set. Michael said we should leave the Blesbok to enable them to relax for the next day's hunt. Tomorrow morning we would bring Hendrik Sr. who is a master in locating animals. The next morning, we quickly spotted the three Blesbok rams. Once again, the chase was on. These animals can run. We spent about an hour trying to get close for a shot. In the distance we could see the Blesbok running with their dainty hoofs and large chest. We came to a large grassy area. Neil spotted the three Blesbok in the grass. They were actually standing still; they probably thought that they were hidden from us. I placed the crosshairs of my scope on the Blesbok to the left and slowly squeezed the trigger. It was an 180 yard shot. The Blesbok faltered and stumbled. He was down. I was relieved and put my arm around Michael. I shook Neil's hand. I was greatly relieved. Neil said 'It is over, Steve.' I said that I needed to recover

⁹¹The competition rewarded the winning author and his partner five days of accommodation and a hunt which involved the following trophies: 1 Gemsbok, 1 Springbok, 1 Steenbok, 1 Duiker. See: <http://www.kalahari-trophy-hunting.com/blesbok-blesbok-amen.html>

from a large build-up of tension. We went to the Blesbok to take pictures and measure its horns. The horns measured 16.5 inches; Rowland-Ward and Namibian gold. The body had a beautiful purple color. I thought it was the most beautiful animal that I had ever seen. I will never again under-estimate the Blesbok! That night, Tienie made a fantastic Blesbok Stroganoff. Superb eating! (Hofmann 2008).

Like Ritvo and MacKenzie describe about the Hunt in colonial times, anthropologist Heidi Dahles demonstrates that this type of narrative brings out a symbolic battle between humans and animals (See History Chapter and MacKenzie, 1987; Ritvo, 1989). Dahles remarks that whereas humans usually make a strict distinction between themselves and animals, hunters blur this distinction to construct a symbolic 'fair game' (Dahles, 1990, 1993). For the sake of good sport hunters unify with nature through narratives and also by means of camouflage clothing and practices like 'crab-walking'. In the PH-course we were taught as a first rule in ethics that the hunter should kill as cleanly and humanely as possible and that he should 'show his respect toward the animal being hunted by travelling on foot in the spirit of giving the prey a fair chance' (excerpt from the ECGMA Professional Hunting textbook).

One could remark that this battle is fictional. Animals are not aware of the game or its rules, and are severely handicapped in terms of weaponry. But this does not explain why hunters construct these narratives and how value is added to hunting. Using Dahles' idea of category blurring, one could also argue that hunters have created a world in which they escape from human society by interacting with wildlife and unifying with nature. By framing the animal to be fierce, cunning, and able to 'run like the wind', the animal is presented without handicap and is staged within this unison framework as an equal and formidable opponent. In Stephen's story above this unison comes out strongly as the hunter voices the blesbok's possible beliefs: 'they probably thought that they were hidden from us'. By anthropomorphizing the animal, and simultaneously zoomorphizing the hunter, boundaries that separate human and animal species are traversed and broken down. The second story elaborates on this and presents a common romantic hunting account of Africa. It is the winning story.

...over the next 14 days, I would experience some of the most beautiful and incredible sights I had ever seen. I would see unbelievable sunrises and sunsets that absolutely defy description. The sunsets are so mesmerizing that each night we would stop whatever we were doing and enjoy a 'sundowner'. It truly doesn't get any better! Last, but certainly not least, were the hordes of magnificent, majestic and unique animals, some of them the most amazing and awesome in existence. There was the Eland, weighing in at over 1,500 pounds, it is the largest antelope in

Africa. At the opposite end of the scale was the Duiker, which is among the smallest of the African antelope. The regal Sable, with its black coat and rearward sweeping horns. The epitome of South Africa is undoubtedly the Impala, an athletically built animal, with tremendous power and grace. The Springbok exhibits great speed, and is known for its long and graceful leaps, soaring great distances seemingly without effort. I could go on-and-on describing these magnificent creatures, but rather than read about it here, you owe it to yourself to experience it in person! In the end, I was fortunate to harvest seven outstanding animals. The competence of my PH was exceptional. Each day, he would school me on flora, fauna, animal behaviour, tracking, and more. To say that I was impressed by his abilities would be a gross understatement. Alas, the animal that I coveted most was also the one to escape me. The final three days were devoted entirely to the elusive 'Gray Ghost'. We spotted several but none presented an ethical shot. Ultimately I departed, knowing that I would have to return and once again match wits with the magnificent Kudu. I think that this is all part of the grand scheme of Africa. Everyone who has been there says the same thing. 'You can never go just once' (Roger D. Libby 2008).

In this narrative we can again read about the symbolic and now also mystical battle between man and nature. The cunning and elusive 'Grey Ghost' outwits the human. The writer will have to return to 'once again match wits with the magnificent Kudu' and although I cannot speculate on the grand scheme of Africa, the creation of a hunting myth through practice but certainly also through lore is part of the wildlife industry's ploy. As we have seen above, the South African hunting industry intentionally expands on the 'unison with nature' by removing humans and human artefacts from the hunting grounds. The visitor, often depicted as a businessman who lives a busy urban life, can escape here from social engagements and re-engage with nature and its mystic entities. Rather than offering a physical animal or one of its body parts, the outfitter thus offers 'the hunt',⁹² a particular kind of interaction with an animal that allows one to immerse in nature, currently available as a package-deal commodity. Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset affirms that 'one does not hunt in order to kill; on the contrary, one kills in order to have hunted'(Ortega y Gasset, 1972).

This is not the case however for South Africa's culling teams. Farmers, and increasingly professional companies with 'shooting teams' hunt wildlife on order. These subcontractors

⁹² Similar to MacKenzie who called 'imperial' hunting 'The Hunt'; a marker of white dominance, manliness and sportsmanship. In a striking process of anthropomorphism, hunters hereby picked 'fair' fights with the largest and most attractive male antelope (MacKenzie 1987).

work for farmers or directly for abattoirs and are paid a commission to shoot wildlife in bulk. An interview excerpt with the Karoo-based abattoir holder Dirk Roux gives more insight:

DR: We shoot all over.

DS: All over the Eastern Cape?

DR: No, all over South Africa. We shoot as far up as Limpopo, that's the farthest up, and near Seelesrust in the Western Cape, a lot in the Freestate, and a little bit in Natal, we don't shoot that much in Natal.

DS: Your personnel also shoot?

DR: Well, we use subcontractors for the shooting. Each company has 5 or 6 or 7 whatever teams which consist of 2-5 guys, most of them are farm guys. But say you're the farmer, a shooting team comes and shoot 100 bucks. I then pay you 100 bucks in meat and I pay them a commission too.

DS: What kind of farms are these?

DR: In the Karoo it is just mainly sheep farms with game on it.

DS: And with ostrich it works differently I take it?

DR: Yes, ostrich is farmed. Game is wild, ostrich is farmed. So they're fed and dozed and all that – they get slaughtered in the abattoir.

DS: Are there not any farmers that have specialised in creating springbok meat or kudu meat?

DR: No, you get farms that have only game of course. But they are not there for the meat, they are there for firstly trophies, hunting, catching and then the meat.

This interview and the stories above also give insight in the services that are offered on a hunting farm. Clients are guided by a professional hunter without whom no overseas client is allowed to hunt on South African land. These professional hunters help locate the animal and tell hunters how to shoot animals, from what distance, and when. 'These guys, they come from Norway or Germany where they hunt between the trees and shoot animals at 30 yards', an outfitter tells me during the professional hunting training. 'They are not used to these plains in which you need to make a 150 yard shot. They miss all the time' (Interview H.Koster, 2009). Some hunting outfitters therefore require their clients to begin their day on the shooting range to practice distance shots. A controversial practice called 'canned hunting' has also arisen, in which animals (especially carnivores such as lions) are hunted on exceptionally small properties to ensure swift success (News24, 2010). To secure success on normal hunts, the professional hunter plays a large role. When training to become one I was instructed always to have the rifle ready when the client was about to shoot. If he missed or hit the animal in a non-

vital area the PH has to make the kill. Missing is by many hunters seen as such as a large personal failure, that PH's frequently have difficulties in interfering with the shooting or correcting of their clients (fieldnotes). During my course I was told of a 'klapschot', said to be performed rarely, in which the PH shoots at the same time or just after the client shoots as to make sure the animal gets shot properly. This may be performed when a hunter as already injured the animal at least once and refuses to let the professional step in. 'There is ego involved here. If you miss, it is like you can't get it up', the hunting teacher tells me. Because of the loudness of the hunter's shot and the closeness of the rifle to the ear the client does not hear the 'klapschot' and the hunt can be subtly ended. More ethically is to inform the client that he may not shoot any more, although 'ego's may be crushed here' (Interview H.Koster, 2009).

Hunts in South Africa are mostly assisted by trackers. This is a lower-skilled job that is carried out by (ex) farm workers who are predominantly black males. I did not encounter or hear of white or female trackers. In the hunting theatre, trackers perform many duties to facilitate the hunt. Not only do they help find the species, on different hunts I have been on the trackers were also dropped off on strategic places throughout the property to drive the desired species towards the client's rifle range. When the animal is shot trackers transport the carcass and may be involved in skinning and removing the blood from the prey to establish a clean and bloodless front stage. They thereby mainly perform backstage tasks to facilitate the onstage spectacle.

Some Africans are presented as what Neumann would call 'good natives' (Neumann, 1997) and thereby perform onstage tasks also. They for instance are presented to intrinsically possess a bond with nature and excel at understanding, tracking, and hunting wildlife. Entire African populations, such as for instance the San, are romantically staged as being spiritually and mystically closer to nature than any other humans in hunting narratives. This idea comes to the fore powerfully in Femke Brandt's dissertation (2013, p. 135) in which a course instructor, who teaches farm workers how to assist during hunts, says:

Your ancestors were specialists at this work. Like ghosts in the mist. They could find tracks like no one else and you all still have this capacity and knowledge! It just has to wake up, use your eyes and ears (Brandt, 2013, p. 135).

Hendrik Sr., a black man in the story above, is equally presented as 'a master in locating animals'. Some game famers mention such Africans to be true inhabitants of South Africa, placing them hierarchically above whites in terms of their legitimate claims to wilderness. On

game farms such ideas about natives materialize in different forms. While local modern dwellings and livelihoods are removed or made invisible to visitors, most ecotourism reserves and some of the more upmarket hunting reserves offer staged ‘cultural’ performances at the lodge which involve exotic clothing and rituals such as ‘African dancing’. These may include trips to staged cultural villages ‘encouraging tourists to experience at one and the same time a trip into a primeval “natural” past and traditional “African” culture’ (Mathers & Landau, 2007, p. 527). Ndebele has written that the ambiguity of such representation of Africans is particularly difficult to reconcile for black African tourists (Ndebele, 2007, p. 104). Theoretically, it latches on to MacCannell’s ideas as the hunters and tourists believe they are being presented with a form of staged authenticity which relates to a non-existing ‘true’ authenticity (MacCannell, 1973).



Figure 5.9 Photo of author during photography exam

After-death, on Mounting Wildlife

After death sets in, wildlife bodies are treated in different manners depending on their status. If they are hunted by trophy hunters, they may receive a ritual tribute which much depends on the hunter’s origin. German hunters, I was taught, are known to give the animal a ‘last meal’

by putting a leaf or twig of the animal's favourite plant in its mouth. Another twig is then wiped in the animal's blood and placed in the hunter's hat after which everyone drinks a toast and speak out a 'Waidmannsheil', a word of thank and praise, to their prey. South African rituals include the eating of (a part of) the animal's liver if it is the first animal one has shot in his life, and having one's forehead and cheeks blooded with blood from the kill. After such rituals the carcass is cleaned and photographed. For most hunters this, we heard, is a defining moments of the hunt. A lot of attention goes to the composition of the shot in which the hunter, his rifle, and the trophy are carefully put into composition. The carcass particularly is staged in such a manner as to demonstrate its horn size (against a clear sky and preferably photographed from below), its skin and its head. An important rule we learned was that 'if the photograph doesn't flatter the client and his trophy, he'll never be happy with it'. Grass, branches and vegetation in front of the animal are removed and the body and head are positioned with sticks and stones (sometimes a farm worker holds up the animal from behind while remaining out of sight of the camera, Brandt 2013 shows) in a 'dignified manner'. Dignity here means for instance that excessive traces of blood, wounds or aggression are concealed, that the hunter is not to put his or her foot or body on the animal, that liquor and cigarettes are absent, and that the animal tongue is not hanging out.

During the hunts I attended, a twig was in some cases positioned in the carcass mouth and the animal was arranged in a lifelike posture as to face the camera, be it in a subjugated manner which is made clear by the position of the hunter or the camera angle. After the design phase the photo is taken of the client and his or her trophy (see figure 5.9). The photo is to be taken from below and the horns are to be contrasted against the sky as to demonstrate the size of the trophy. In most cases a photo is also taken together with the professional hunter who assisted, while trackers tend to be absent from trophy pictures. From here on the animal body is prepared for skinning and dissecting: the wildlife carcass is sent to a butcher or abattoir while the skin is (depending on the hunter's desires) sent to a taxidermist for trophy production. If wildlife is culled by shooting teams (and thus have no trophy status) all rituals are neglected: the animal does not receive tributes and the carcasses are transported directly to abattoirs, butchers, and in some cases taxidermists for souvenir production. While the trophy photo must not be underestimated for its value as a 'token of victory' (Brower, 2005; Kalof & Fitzgerald, 2003), many hunters want a corporeal record of the hunting achievement (and investment), and this is where yet another step in the value chain comes in. The services of a highly regarded taxidermist are called upon to 'resurrect' and immortalise the animal against steep costs (see figure 5.11). Although there are many different mounts, varying from key body parts such as

horns and tusks to complete body mounts, the process, once again, camouflages the violence of the killing, while accentuating the vivacity and power of both the animal and the hunter. As the anthropologist Jane Desmond writes:

In order not to call attention to the required killing that precedes the taxidermy state, all marks of the cause of death such as bullet holes and arrow incisions must be hidden through meticulous stitching of the hide. With the cause of death excised from the visual equation, so also is the presence of the human who precipitated it. The resulting museum dioramas seem to restore the Edenic state before or outside of human presence. In the mounting of hunting trophies, like the deer head on the wall as home décor, of course, the equation is slightly different; in this environment, although the lifelikeness of the animal is still required, the very presence of its body serves as mute and silenced testament to the power and prowess of the hunter, indirectly invoking both the cause and moment of death (Desmond, 2008, pp. 354–355).

By comparing taxidermia to another process of after-death commodification, meat production, the following paragraph shows that animal bodies can take on completely different financial but also symbolic values.

Eating Wildlife

Because of new trade legislation and a deregulated globalized market, the export market for wildlife meat has grown considerably in the last three decades. Dirk Roux, the owner of the country's largest ostrich and game abattoir, as well as board member of the National Ostrich Business Chamber, told me:

...they started harmonizing everything, they had policies for it – and from 1996, we could export everything. And when I say everything, I mean all antelope, ostrich and zebra and so. That's basically how it has been since then. It's grown and come back again and grown and gone back a bit. Last year was quite high in growth and this year I think it won't be the same as last year due to the economic crunch (Interview D.Roux, 2009).



Figure 5.10. A collection of trophies in a taxidermy (photo by author)

Whereas game meat was only transferred to two or three European nations before deregulation, borders opened and facilitated the travel of wildlife bodies and body parts. Except for ostrich and crocodile farms, I did not encounter any plots that had game meat production as their sole purpose. Roux explains that for game farmers meat production is literally ‘at the bottom of the food chain’ (ibid). Game farmers have found higher prices selling safaris, leather and experiences, and they try to sell their owned wildlife as costly as possible. Dirk explains:

Initially you want to sell the animals as trophies, to overseas clients, Americans, or whatever. You have about 3% trophies in a herd on average. So that’s number one. The next thing is ecotourism and local hunting: not that much money, but you want to sell beds. Most farms have a little lodge, so you’re not really selling the animals, you’re selling the beds. Someone comes and only shoots two springbok, but he stays three nights and brings his family. After that, the next best price is the catching of the animal and selling them alive on game auctions or whatever the case may be. Then they still have too many animals and finally call us. We send capture teams with cooled trucks and they kill and bleed the animals in the *veld*. At our place, we take off the skin and debone them into all the cuts (Interview D.Roux, 2009).

More than 90% of wildlife meat, some 845 tons in 2009, is then shipped overseas, to Europe. 'It goes into a sea container here, then to Port Elizabeth by truck and in three weeks we clear it in Rotterdam. It's cheap: it's all by boat and it's all frozen so it goes for around three rand per kilo'. The prices that are achieved in the European Union are too high for the local market: 'If we had to sell to the local market, the price to the farmer could not be so high' (ibid). Only the second helping of wildlife meat goes to the South African market, which is a growing market, but remains small. A study by Laetitia Radder tries to find reasons for the exclusion of wildlife meat in South African diets and concludes that 'tradition', 'hedonism', 'security' are important values to consumers, while factors such as 'cost', 'disgust', '(in)convenience', and 'sensory appeal' influence the choice of wildlife meat (Radder & Grunert, 2009, p. 170). Of the wildlife meat that does get sold locally, abattoir holders reckon a lion's share goes to overseas appetites that have come to the country for tourism. Tourists do not only come to see, shoot, hear or film wildlife species, they come to eat them too. They wish to order game meat in restaurants and bring home vacuum packed 'biltong'.⁹³ After the overseas and national clients are catered for, the remainder is used as food or sometimes as payment for local workers. An abattoir supervisor tells me the carcasses and bones of wildlife, on which bits of meat always remain, sell locally to the 'poor black market' that live close to the plant.

Not all wildlife species and their body parts reach the meat market though. Various abattoir owners and game farmers confirm that 'meat species' have stayed stable over time. 'Giraffes for instance', one abattoir salesman says, 'they're not meat. They're nice when you have tourists, who see a giraffe walking around chowing a bit. But what must I do with giraffes?'. The industry started with springbok and kudu, but now blesbok, impala and oryx have been added as popular 'meat species'. The meat species taxonomy is not set in stone however. For instance, the at one stage virtually extinct black gnu has been doing exceptionally well on private wildlife farms. Their prices have come down strongly and their carcasses are flooding the major abattoirs. The animal is said to have a distinct flavour and as 'we never had this amount of gnu available', the Game Abattoirs and Meat Exporters (GAME) is working hard at the moment to establish them on the market as 'game meat' (Interview D.Roux, 2009). Remarkably, most of these species are not marketed individually.

⁹³ Biltong is dried and cured meat, often likened to beef jerkey.

That makes it difficult for marketing. If you come and say: I want oryx we are in trouble. We only cull let's say 500 oryx a year, but we cull 5000 kudus, do you understand? On the label we put 'game meat' (Interview D.Roux, 2009).

In certain restaurants one will find the difference between species noted on the menu card. In most restaurants and supermarkets however, distinctions are only made between ostrich, warthog, and 'game', a category that may refer to any of the mentioned species.

Abridgement

The effect of wildlife ownership regulations has been considerable. Besides creating increased individual wealth overnight by giving added value to land and wildlife, the regulation's financial security measures contributed to the wildlife economy on a macro scale. By putting a 'price on the head of wildlife', a marketing system commenced in which prices of utilizable wildlife species inflated and wildlife business was absorbed by financial markets and organs. With the implementation and fortification of wildlife ownership⁹⁴ a legally guarded and defined version of game farms came into being that promoted high game fences and raised wildlife and land prices considerably. Legally speaking, game farms have remained unmoved since the early 1990s, but in terms of business diversification and business expansion a lot ensued. Wildlife is being commodified and converted into money in different manners: besides extending and capitalizing hunting and (eco)tourism, privatization has enabled wildlife bodies to be scrutinized in each stage of their life. Wildlife is thereby bred, raised, sold, and processed to meat according to principles which are sponged from modern agriculture such as the:

(i) systematic anatomical, ethological and ecological modifications of nonhuman forms and rhythms; (ii) for the fast, cheap and extensive production of tasty protein; (iii) residing in cuts of [meat] and their genetic determinants; (iv) where success is judged according to the twin logics of improvement and profit; (v) thus orientated largely towards the future; (vi) guided and legitimated by the discourses of a range of animal sciences; (vii) for whom death should be quick, cheap and invisible. (Lorimer & Driessen, 2011, p. 4)

For land-owning business men, wild animals present an attractive alternative natural resource to stock. It is a highly mobile, self-reproducing organism that is adapted to South Africa's land

⁹⁴ Through the 1991 Game Theft Act

and ecology. By removing and fencing off natural threats to its existence – such as predators and disease - a game farm can without much effort produce surplus biomass. What makes the resource distinct from traditional farm animals is that human predators are willing to pay not only for the corporeal resource, but also for the experience of removing it from the land. Game-capturing teams come in once or twice per year, animal auctions are organized for the land-owner and trophy hunters arrive to pay and maintain the experiment. Moreover, the animal carcasses can be knotted into capital flows multiple times. The trophy hunter buys the experience of killing the animal, the abattoir buys the meat of the animal, the taxidermist pays a commission for the skin of the animal, tourists buy leftover skins that are interwoven into ornaments and employees either accept residual meat as a partial wage or buy it with their undersized wages.

The wildlife industry is therefore continuously pushing boundaries and further exploring the wildlife body and its life phases. This chapter aimed to anecdotally demonstrate how four crucial phases – life, sex, death and post-mortem - are now increasingly scrutinized, managed, altered and controlled and go paired with a whole range of commodity types:

| Phase | Stage | Commodity |
|-------------|-----------|--|
| Sex | Meiosis | Sperm; embryo-flushing |
| | Gestation | Ultra-scan; embryo sales |
| | Birth | Animal trading; subsidies |
| Life | Youth | Cubs can be petted; fed; viewed; experienced; hikes, game drives, accommodation, media representations) |
| | Nursing | Breeding animals; experience |
| | Adult | Experience; Viewing; Translocation (to abattoirs, auctions, new owners) |
| Death | Death | The hunt; culling; translocation; abattoir undertaking |
| Post-mortem | Carcass | Wildlife meat; leather; plumage; eggs; pet food (offal) fat (oils); taxidermy (skin, bones and horn); trophy; souvenirs (bone, hair, tail) |

Figure 5.11: Wildlife life stages and matching commodities

These divergent forms of wildlife value-production converge on different types of land, which are carefully managed as front, back, and offstage spaces. The commodified ‘noun-chunks’ that wildlife have become are introduced into imagined perplexing landscapes which facilitate value-adding characteristics such as ‘wild’, ‘untamed’ and ‘natural’. The geographical domain that wildlife occupies has hereby become an important part of the ‘the wilderness experience’ commodity that is being marketed. As Garland says, what is crucial for the capitalization on wildlife is ‘the image of Africa as emblematic of all that is wild and natural—of the continent

as a privileged space of nature within the global symbolic imaginary' (Garland, 2008, p. 63). The mental project that imagines humans and their artefacts away from this landscape locks in tightly with this image, thereby detaching land from their existing or possible social roles.



He knows that there are in the soul tints more bewildering, more numberless, and more nameless than the colours of an autumn forest... Yet he seriously believes that these things can every one of them, in all their tones and semitones, in all their blends and unions, be accurately represented by an arbitrary system of grunts and squeals.

G. F. Watts, page 88, 1904

Chapter VI Making up Species

In chapter two I concluded that in the process of constructing nature, ‘it matters where the lines are drawn’ (Delaney 2001: 489). It matters whether official lines are drawn in one place rather than another. It matters whether these lines are thick and sturdy or thin and porous. It matters what these lines include and exclude as characteristics of official boxes define animals as common property, game, livestock, as alien invasive species, as endangered species or as vermin. These different classifications influence the way landowners manage their land, fences, animals and business. The collection of all these individual and linked boxes defines what nature is and means to South Africa. Furthermore, these classifications have serious consequences for the livelihoods of all wildlife stakeholders; for landowners and managers, for their workers (who are employed or not-employed based on the legal usability of wildlife), for conservationists, government officials, citizens of the republic and animals themselves.

After having assessed the history and state of privatized wildlife in South Africa in the previous chapters, following Puar and Livingston I wish in this chapter to ‘go beyond species by emphasizing relationships over types and by joining a politics that queries the origins, products, and uses of classificatory hierarchies’ (2011, p. 7). Not only the definition of official classifications but also their relationships and hierarchies –the taxonomies– construct distinctions between things and thereby construct populations which can be managed by policy. Related to humans Foucault calls this biopolitics or ‘the set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species became the object of a political strategy, of a general strategy of power’ (Foucault, 2010). Here I wish to focus on the biopolitics of wildlife, or the set of mechanisms through which official wildlife taxonomies have become the object of political strategy to construct and control populations of natural entities. Through the framing of species in terms of policy, animal classification systems have powerful societal ripple effects. An important aspect of wildlife classifications that is stressed in this chapter is that official taxonomies do not limit themselves to the corporeal entities a society defines as wildlife. They are conceived to shape human-nature relationships by laying out how humans can, should, ought and may deal with nature and, as we have seen in preceding chapters, can equally govern things such as wildlife habitat and the management thereof. Attributing official meanings to wildlife can for instance determine which percentage of a country should be set aside for the conservation of wild animals, how many hectares of land are necessary to keep certain species, and which edifices, artefacts and humans are allowed on such land.

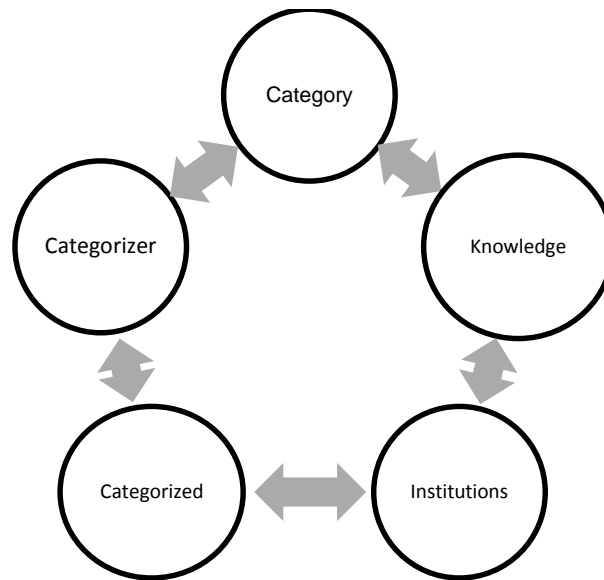


Figure 6.1: Making up species

An official category is thus more than a metaphysical or descriptive distinction: it pencils in underlying definitions, rules and practices and confers a meaning that determines how biophysical matter ought to be enacted. Official taxonomies and their categories, Starr states, should be seen as ‘frameworks of incentives’ (Starr, 1992). The boundaries provide ‘a conceptual map of categorical inclusions and exclusions’ (Delaney, 2001, p. 489) which stimulate or deter humans from interacting with particular entities. An official category name may in itself not be an explanation with depth or power, but as it is perceived to be real by an institutional system, it does tie the natural and the social into an information infrastructure (e.g. Bowker & Star, 2000).

As a framework to structure and theorize this theme I will employ Ian Hacking’s valuable work on classification and specifically a tailored version of his model for ‘making up people’ (Hacking, 2007, p. 288). I believe this framework can function as a model for ‘making up species’ and serve as a thematic structure for this section (Chapter 6 and 7). Rather than simply distinguishing and analyzing classifications, Hacking socially embeds taxonomies by studying categories within a broader societal framework. He starts out with a given *category* (1), which should be seen as the distinctions between phenomena in a certain domain. Labels such as Eastern Cape Kudu, alien, indigenous, threatened or damage-causing, are all category-labels. Categories, as understood within this framework, are concerned with the names that are given to various distinctions. Secondly, there is (2) *knowledge* about the classifications, the information that constitutes category-membership. In this regard, one could discern the *ideas* or *theories* that constitute categories, such as the idea that species from other countries should

be categorized as *alien*, and the underlying rationale and interests. But one could also discern practices of knowledge creation such as counting individuals as knowledge related to category-making. Then there are (3) the *institutions*, socially embedded systems which reiterate the classifications. I follow Hacking's definition here, describing institutions as 'deliberately organized and structured entities, not mere practice and custom' (Hacking, 2007, p. 296). In the case of official taxonomies, one may think of laws, permit systems, tax collectors and farm inspectors working within structured bureaucracies. Usually these are structured in a top-down manner, although one must not disregard the agency of institutional actors to structure and restructure institutions and thereby influence the whole process of making up species. For instance, if a fence inspector changes his practices by fining intensively or not inspecting electrification, this may lead to various reactions and ramifications for stakeholders. Fourthly, the framework consists of (4) the *categorized*, which are subject of various classifications.⁹⁵ As Hacking states, in traditional logic, the categorized are simply extensions of the classes defined (ibid.). In a given social setting however, the categorized are the flesh and blood of men, women, children, and animals. The professional hunters, who are legally required to accompany hunters, or the animals who are deemed to be illegal or threatening, are both categorized things of which a certain legal form of prescription defines how they should act or should be dealt with (exercise of biopower). A broad definition of this aspect may be defined as those things and actors that are influenced by the category labels. In the case of wildlife politics in South Africa this may include actors in the local economy, persons working and living with wildlife, but also land, flora and fauna. Those who create the category-knowledge, finally, there are (5) categorizers. I define categorizers as those who have an increased potential to influence constitutive knowledge regarding categories. Hacking prefers the term expert, but as this suggests a sense of specialism which need not be present or necessary to define categories, I would like to suggest the more general term *categorizers*.

By analysing official wildlife taxonomies in South Africa this section thus attempts to address how categorizers use category theories to create categories and institutionally uphold them to influence the categorized (see figure 6.1). This chapter will further focus on the category names, the official knowledge that discriminates wild animals and the institutions through which this knowledge is embedded, the categorizers and the categorized, while the following chapter comments on the politics of 'making up species'. To explicate the abstract

⁹⁵ Hacking speaks more specifically of peoples in this regard, but as I attempt to broaden this framework, I have chosen to use 'categorized'.

discussion on categories, I have added various vignettes about ostriches, lechwes and kudus to show the interactions of categories within a broader societal framework. Questions that arise in this chapter are: what wildlife categories are prevalent in South African policy? How are animal taxonomies built up in South Africa and how do categories relate to each other? And, which institutions are in place to hold sway over wildlife classifications? I will start out with a field example that poses all these questions.

Taxonomic Pluralism, or the Eastern Cape kudu

During my fieldwork I took part in a Professional Hunting Course of the Eastern Cape Game Management Association (ECGMA). Set on a game farm some 50 kilometres from Fort Beaufort, the course provided me with an opportunity to be around twenty (future) game farmers, professional hunters, cullers, outfitters and other industry men for two weeks. It consisted of various classes and exams in skinning, shooting, ballistics, legislation, marketing, natural knowledge, hospitality, and trophy judgement. The most difficult exam was trophy judgement of which the basics were stipulated in our textbook:

Most hunters are guided by trackers, who may be good, but who have little appreciation of trophy quality and no training in trophy estimation. It is therefore in every professional hunter's interest to learn to estimate horn length. This is not easy. The animal may be far away, or move among bushes, trees or other animals and gives the hunter only a brief glimpse of its horns, so it is essential to learn some quick methods of estimation. Calling (judging) a trophy is a major issue for a professional hunter. If he gets it wrong, his client may pay big bucks for an inferior trophy. A professional hunter should be able to estimate a trophy to within 5% of its actual measurements.⁹⁶

Animals are hereby subdivided into superior and inferior trophies, while humans take roles as either hunters or trackers. When an animal is tracked, it is the professional hunter who adds monetary value to it by making a trophy estimation. He connects the natural world to the global commodity market by determining the size of animal horns.⁹⁷ The credo in this judgement is rather straightforward: the bigger the better. What 'better' means however and how 'bigger' is measured depends on the trophy record-system that one adheres to. These record-systems are

⁹⁶ Excerpt of ECGMA Professional Hunting Course Book

⁹⁷ Not all trophy animals have horns: specific measurements are made for animals such as crocodiles, elephants, hippopotamuses, snakes and so on.

captured in sizeable journals that provide taxonomies of huntable species and exhibit what animals with what horn size have been shot where, when and by whom. The journals separate animals into huntable and non-huntable species and, in a further subdivision that depends on size, into trophies and non-trophies.

| SPECIES | RW (inches) | SCI ^{Points} (inches) | SPECIES | RW (inches) | SCI ^{Points} (inches) |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Damara dik-dik | 2 3/8 | 8 | Blesbuck | 16 1/2 | 39 |
| Sharpe's grysbok | 1 3/8 | 5 | Black faced impala | 20 7/8 | 50 |
| Blue duiker | 1 1/4 | 4 | Black wildebeest | 22 7/8 | 72 |
| Red duiker | 2 1/2 | 8 | Red hartebeest | 23 | 62 |
| Bushpig | 3 5.5 | 11 | Impala | 23 5/8 | 54 |
| Suni | 3 | 9 | Black rhinoceros | 24 | 56 |
| Cape grysbuck | 3 | 7 | Roan antelope | 27 | 68 |
| Klipspringer | 4 1/8 | 11 | Nyala | 27 | 63 |
| Common duiker | 4 1/2 | 11 | White rhinoceros | 28 | 70 |
| Steenbok | 4 1/2 | 11 | Waterbuck | 28 | 70 |
| Oribi | 5 7/8 | 13 | Blue wildebeest | 28 1/2 | 70 |
| Mountain reedbuck | 6 7/8 | 26 | Hippopotamus | 29 7/8 | 50 |
| Grey rhebuck / Vervet | 7 7/8 | 18 | Eland (Cape/Livingstone) | 35 | 77/79 |
| Warthog | 13 | 30 | Gemsbok | 40 | 88 |
| Bontebok | 14 | 36 | Sable antelope | 41 7/8 | 100 |
| Reedbuck | 14 | 21 | Buffalo | 42 | 100 |
| Springbuck | 14 | 30 (38) | Kudu | 53 7/8 | 121/98 EC |
| Tsessebe | 15 | 40 | Elephant | 80 lb | 100 lb |
| Bushbuck | 15 | 31 | Crocodile | 14 ft | 9 ft |
| Lechwe | 26 | 58 | Fallow deer | 25 2/8 | 130 |

Figure 6.2: Trophy Minima (photo by author)

Professional hunters in the Eastern Cape learn to judge according to the 'Rowland Ward' (RW) and 'Safari Club International' (SCI) system, which are the most widely used systems in the African hunting scene. These two knowledge systems have similar ambitions, but use slightly different rules to administer animals. The Rowland Ward record system is the oldest trophy system and only accepts entries that are measured with a steel cable by an approved 'Master Measurer'. The measurement ought to happen at least thirty days after the animal is 'bagged', by which time the natural shrinkage of horns and tusks is complete. The length of the longer horn is then recorded in inches. Safari Club International totals the length of both horns as well as the circumference of the horns at the base and records this total in 'points'. It is a Texas-based company, which is gaining popularity.

For the 'Trophy Judgement' exam, we had to be able to recognize all regionally huntable species from a distance of 100 meters, as well as their sex and their RW and SCI minimum dimensions (See figure 6.2 whereby the locally required species are highlighted in yellow). These minima are based on entries in the respective record books, by which the top third of the entries are registered as gold trophies, the middle third as silver and the bottom third as bronze. Animals that do not meet the minima are deemed to be inferior and are not

registered in the books. One can see from my scribbling in figure 6.2 that the minima are not cast in stone. They depend on trends and the amount of animals that are shot. The executive manager of Rowland Ward told me for example that kudu trophies are getting bigger.

Now it is 53 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches. That might need to go up a little bit because they are being looked after, they are not competing with cattle anymore. There are ranches dedicated to wild animals so competition has changed. Especially here in Tabazimbi, Limpopo province: there are a lot of big ones. It is nothing drastic; we may change it by an inch or half an inch to get us to a point where we are comfortable (Interview J.Browne, 2010).

Before we started practicing for our test, we were asked to update some of the minima. When we got to the ‘kudu’, a new point score was added in the Safari Club International column for Eastern Cape kudus (EC in the schedule). At 98 points, the minimum was significantly less than the normal kudu score of 121. According to the hunting school manager the Eastern Cape kudu was in the process of being recognized as a new, smaller-sized, subspecies.

For matters of curiosity and verification, I briefly explored kudu subspecies by doing a literature review of ‘Molecular Ecology’ publications on kudus. Meester and Setzer, in a 1971 publication, describe four different subspecies of kudus. Later authors (Haltenorth & Diller 1980; Walker et al. 1983; Hall and Underwood 1984; Grubb 1993) identify only one species, while Kingdon (1997) includes three (In Nersting & Arctander, 2008). None of the authors recognize the Eastern Cape kudu as a subspecies. Although being undersized and doubtlessly incomplete, the review brought an important point to the fore. That is, as John Dupré states, biological science has failed, up until now, to create a unique or privileged set of biological kinds (1996). In the plurality of ‘species sets’ that biologists have crafted lies epistemic uncertainty. This uncertainty creates space for discussion on the reliability of any adapted animal taxonomy. An interview excerpt shows clearly how this space is in South Africa’s wildlife industry utilized in attempts to alter established taxonomies.

HK: This place is the kudu mekka of the world. The Eastern Cape Greater Kudu is beautiful and we have plenty. But it is not recognized as a subspecies.

DS: By government?

HK: No, not by government, not by Rowland Ward. We got it tested, blood samples sent to labs, I called the guys in England and all that, and they won’t accept it.

DS: And Safari Club International?

HK: Yes, they have it. (Interview H.Koster, 2012)

Because horn size is such an important part of the wildlife commodity, Eastern Cape game farmers reason that hunters will not visit their densely populated kudu region because of the lack of ‘trophy material’. Their efforts to promote the subspecies ‘Eastern Cape Greater Kudu’ are therefore aimed at guardians of different knowledge-systems; at scientists, politicians and editors of hunting journals. One of these guardians, Anita Browne of Rowland Ward, says: ‘It’s a geographical different population, but it is a difficult one. We do allow for geographical differences with other species so that becomes a bit tricky and we need to review it. I’m sure DNA-tests will mark out the differences’. She further affirms that many hunters and hunting organizations approach Rowland Ward to try and shift species. The industry ‘burdens us with all the classifications they make ... simply to get a lot of number ones’. That is, by adding species and subspecies to record trophy books, more categories in which hunters can compete and win are created. The largest hunting fraternity, SCI, has recently listed the Eastern Cape Greater Kudu as an official species, besides the Western Greater Kudu, East African Greater Kudu and Southern Greater Kudu (which is a different set of subspecies than found in the aforementioned publications). There is thus some plasticity in hunting taxonomies.

Official Categories

Besides taxonomies in the life sciences and hunting journals, the South African government, through environmental policy, maintains which species and subspecies reside in the Republic. According to draft policy which aims to determine Alien and Invasive species government lists two kinds of kudus, greater and lesser kudus (Alien Invasive Species List 3, 2009). Whereas hunting outfitters want to reclassify kudus to attract hunters to their region, government is concerned about different issues such as the spreading of disease or harm by certain species. To assess such potential impacts, the government deemed it necessary to make a complete inventory of South Africa’s wildlife species as well as foreign species that occur within the political boundaries of the country. With regard to the kudu a state-led biological assessment described lesser kudus as indigenous species, and greater kudus as invasive species that may not occur in the whole country. These classifications determine that lesser kudus may be hunted, bred and transported, and thereby indirectly positively impact those regions in South Africa which have an abundance of lesser kudus and negatively impact regions which do not. Because kudus require the highest game fences, such policy may also impact the distribution of mesh borders and mobility throughout the countryside.

In taxonomizing animals, government officials have very different ambitions than hunters, and also than life scientists. While biologists use taxonomies to understand and capture life's diversity in a comprehensive manner, government officials aim to create a practical legal system that determines citizen's positions in relation to other entities. Official classifications are necessary to formulate criminal and civil law, to control disease, to levy taxes, award reliefs, regulate economics and collect statistics. Humans are classified according to parameters such as age, nationality, income level, profession, companionship, and race, while animals are classified according to features such as scarcity, their level of threat, or origin (see following paragraph). State taxonomies transform continually in a dynamic process that defines rules, regulations and legal standings concerning the interactions between humans and animals.

In most cases, state taxonomies are adopted from biological studies. Inconvenience frequently arises though, because there is, as the kudu example shows, more room for interpretation and disagreement in life sciences than there is in governmental spheres. Whereas biologists can have fifty competing definitions of the concept death, government has to choose one (to establish, for instance, citizenship). The same goes for wildlife definitions. While it is likely that researchers argue about the geographical origins of certain kudu subspecies, government believes it should bring out definite lists with no ambiguity that define precisely which kudu may be kept and how it may be hunted and traded where and when.

Management of complexity thereby forms an important discrepancy between biological and bureaucratic category-systems. In an article on Linnaeus, the historian Cain shows that the Linnaean taxonomy system was originally chosen for pragmatic reasons; it was based on its lenience towards description and perception (Cain 1958: 152 in Ereshefsky, 1994). Linnaeus created his system of 300 *genii*, partly, so that it could be remembered by each naturalist (Lakoff, 1987). Likewise, bureaucratic categories are designed to carry a basic level of pragmatism. A state must be able to describe, clarify, implement and take responsibility for all its classifications. This creates tension. It is unacceptable for governments to ignore - and thereby possibly harm - the diversity of life, while it is unfeasible and unworkable for government to uphold distinct policies for the millions of natural units academics distinguish. Somehow, government classifications must balance between the complexity of scientific distinctions (or one could say, the complexity of life on earth) and the human practices of day-to-day life. The bureaucratic system must attempt to find compromise between what Rosch calls 'over-discrimination and over-abstraction' (Mervis & Rosch, 1981, pp. 77–78). Therefore, Scott and others have argued that cutting complexity to manageable proportions is intrinsic to the very design of state categories (J. C. Scott, 1998, p. foreword).

To tackle complexity governments generally construct what Stephen Helmreich calls *metataxonomic categories*, overarching categories that transcend ‘the classificatory grid of biological nomenclature’ (Helmreich, 2005, p. 110). These are broader groupings that relate to issues the government is supposed to act upon. Government is not necessarily interested in, for instance, the dozens of reproductive systems animals has, but once animals are so successful at reproducing that they become, in their eyes, a plague and thereby a risk to humans or food security, they need to assess management, control, and thus classify such animals. Examples of metataxonomic categories for wildlife in South Africa are the following: Alien, Invasive, Cites 1, 2, 3, vulnerable, protected, endangered, critically endangered, exotic, high-profile or damage causing. Whole animal species - rather than individual animals - are assigned to these categories by means of government gazetted species lists. These classifications configure human control over animals by defining who may treat certain species and in which manner. The species lists, as well as the metataxonomic categories, are subject to continuous debate. Because a lot is at stake in the management of wildlife, there are attempts to delist species from some categories, enlist them in others, alter category definitions, destroy categories, and, as the game farmers in the Eastern Cape show, add new species altogether.

If there is one thing that the Eastern Cape Greater Kudu case illustrates, then it is that there are many ways of taxonomizing animals. Whether one chooses Rowland Ward, Safari Club International, official policy or the leading biologist taxonomy, there are many ways of ordering wildlife. Taxonomizers borrow from some taxonomies and close their eyes to others. Whether we are speaking of taxonomies of the life sciences, every-day taxonomies or official taxonomies, no definite, privileged, monistic category-system has been devised. As there are no ‘extra-scientific’ reasons to believe at this point in time that such a system will be developed, we are to accept taxonomic pluralism (J. Dupré, 1995, p. 441). We are to accept that there are countless ways of taxonomizing animals.

Knowledge: Wildlife Boundaries in South Africa

Wildlife category names and especially those that are formalized through law, oddly enough, do not often come with explanatory texts. South African policy texts rely on distinctions between, to start with, humans and non-humans (a distinction that has kept academia busy for hundreds of years), but do not define what these subjects are. The same goes for animals: policy texts generally omit definitions of the distinctions between animals. This is because policy is, as stated above, not interested in uncovering the workings of life, but is interested in managing

it. Trying to uncover the ideas behind principal distinctions I believe, is fruitful here as it can uncover an official wildlife taxonomy and dig up vested interests behind such categories.

As stated in the introduction the most principal animal dichotomy in policy around the world discriminates *domesticated* and *wild* animals. This rigid distinction is commonly entangled with questions of ownership. Wild species are managed strictly by the state, while domesticated animals are managed by landowners. Wildlife is regarded to be common property and domesticated animals are private property. The two categories are accordingly rigidly separated by law, administration and institutions. In South Africa, wildlife falls under the Department of Environmental Affairs, domesticated animals under the Department of Agriculture. Wildlife is to be protected, while domesticated animals are to be improved.⁹⁸

With the rise of large-scale wildlife production the boundaries between these two distinctions have been provoked. ‘Seemingly contradictory by definition’, anthropologist Yuka Suzuki writes, ‘the concept of ‘producing wildlife’ upsets traditionally understood boundaries between the wild and the domestic, and public nature versus private property’ (Suzuki, 2007, p. 229). South African landowners have, as we have read, been bestowed with institutional arrangements that facilitate a wildlife property system. The wild-domesticated dichotomy has thereby been intersected to include the novel category ‘game’.

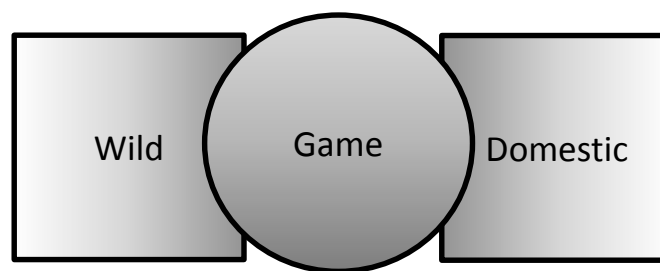


Figure 6.3: Official animal classifications in South Africa

Game is privately owned wildlife to which some conservation laws and some agricultural laws apply; it is legally and physically midway. Whereas the legal classification of animals has become three-tiered, Suzuki observes that the boundary creatures are usually referred to as ‘wild’ by landowners, while they are seen as domesticated by conservationists and others such as tourists (Suzuki in Cassidy & Mullin, 2007, p. 8). Tourists do not care for official boundaries and see what they seek. Their gaze is perhaps more powerful than they imagine, and can cause domestic species to become wildlife and vice versa, as the following vignette shows.

⁹⁸ See for example the respective preambles of the Animal Improvement Act and the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, No. 10 of 2004.

The ‘new’ South Africa opened its doors to an ever-increasing number of tourists. Once these overseas visitors started venturing into the Karoo, they ‘discovered’ the ostrich; a common South African species which tourists deem exceptional. This appreciation continues to result in new identities for the large flightless bird. Although it had long ago shifted to agriculture and was mainly kept for consumption, with rising tourism attention started shifting from the animal’s flesh, skin and feathers to its overall aesthetics, its character, its ability to run, to race, and to carry persons.⁹⁹ An ostrich farmer I spoke to told me he was somewhat taken by surprise that ostrich tourism brought in this kind of mass revenue.

Overseas people really love those ostriches. At our place we do hand-feeding, ostrich safaris, mounting ostriches, and racing them. It is a unique experience we provide. And it works out nicely. But we didn’t think these buses with people would keep coming (Ostrich Board member, 2009).

Ostriches, which are classified as agricultural ‘live stock units’, are typically farmed intensively, an ostrich producer tells me ‘they are fed and dozed and get slaughtered in an abattoir’ (ibid.). Overseas visitors however are interested to see the bird in different settings; they want to see animals roaming free and go on ‘ostrich safaris’ to encounter them. As more and more tourists lay eyes on the species, ironically, it is regaining some of its status as a ‘wild’ animal. With the increase of wildlife ranching and agricultural tourism, it seems that ostriches and many other species have started to permeate the central policy-based categorical border of wildlife and agricultural production. By traversing back and forth between categories the species problematize the concept of domestication. The irony of it becomes more lucid in this excerpt of an interview with an Environmental Affairs official.

It happens with all kind of species. Let’s take the lama; there is some populations for wool in South Africa. That’s regulated under agriculture; we haven’t got anything to do with it. But as soon they have tourists looking at lamas and taking photos, then it’s [our] game (Interview A. du Plessis, 2009).

Put crudely, a tourist camera has the power to subjugate an animal to either conservation or agricultural legislation, with very different frameworks of incentives and consequences attached. The piercing of these strict category boxes causes surprise and confusion. It is unclear if animals can fall under two different sets of legislation at the same time, as the legislation is in many cases

⁹⁹ Ostrich tourism started before the 1990s, but it did significantly grow and branch out in the post-Apartheid years.

contradictory. One cannot have one rule saying that ostriches are not to be shot from September to February out of respect of their breeding season, while having other legislation allowing the animal to be slaughtered all year long. It is impractical to have one rule prescribing that merely a dozen crocodile trophies are to be exported overseas per annum, while another set of rules tries to facilitate the export of twelve thousand kilos of crocodile meat and leather. The manner in which policy momentarily legitimizes this disorder is by making a distinction between two different creatures altogether. Policy speaks about wild ostriches (or horses or crocodiles or lamas) and farm ostriches (or horses or crocodiles or lamas). By giving blurred definitions or not giving any definitions at all to traits such as wild, domesticated, alien or damage causing, boundaries are created within single species. These new distinctions may lead to partial legal clarity, but similarly lead to increased ambiguity as well. Visitors do not notice the distinction between wild and domestic ostriches. They do not taste the difference between them. One now sees crocodiles, lamas, elands, warthogs, gnus, kudus, springboks, ostriches and other species that have developed multiple personality, or, better said, legality disorders. As the diversification of farms and animal products are developing into large-scale industries, these legal problems increase.

Although a wild-domestic scale may seem overly simplistic here, domestication remains important as a much used narrative and for understanding key shifts in humans' relationships with animals and other humans (Mullin, 2002, p. 389). We cannot simply state that more and more wildlife is 'becoming' domesticated. The observation is accurate, but incomplete. Like the ostrich and lama, more and more domesticated animals are also 'becoming' wild. The tourist gaze is expanding and agro-tourism is (especially in South Africa) increasingly widespread. If we want to describe the shift that is taking place, it is accurate to state that more and more common property is becoming private property, whether it is domestic or wild property.

If we delve deeper into South Africa's classificatory system and focus specifically on wildlife, we find a myriad of other meta-taxonomical discriminations. These vary in terms of jurisdiction and in terms of locality. They are created by international treaties, national environmental guidelines, provincial legislation and by enduring apartheid conservation laws. It is not possible to list all, but I will focus on the 'category-theories' that constitute different meta-taxonomical units here. That is, I devised a simple model that describes South Africa's four most common wildlife category theories. It goes by the name 'STOP' (see figure 6.4). The four theories relate to the *Scarcity* of specific species, the *Threat* they pose to human livelihoods, the *Origin*, usually the nationality of specific species, and policy *Preference* for species that enjoy special treatment on the base of cultural, religious or other beliefs. The

categories are in no sense mutually exclusive and all come with their own scales, which determine policy definitions. In general, species that balance to the left of the scale benefit in terms of policy protection, although we shall see that protection is difficult to define and is also increasingly delineated to enable intense production (i.e. if it is rare or charismatic, it should be bred by private producers). I will briefly comment on these four types of wildlife policy theories.

| Categorical Theories | Scales | |
|------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Category of Scarcity | Rare | Abundant |
| Category of Threat | Symbiotic | Harmful |
| Category of Origin | Indigenous | Alien |
| Category of Preference | Charismatic | Uncharismatic |

Figure 6.4: STOP MODEL

Let us consider the ‘*category of scarcity*’ first. Surely, this sounds like a very clear-cut concept. The policy category ‘critically endangered’ for instance ought to have a direct link to the counting of individuals in this domain: species with less than X members and more than Y members fall into this category. The category has strong, classical, boundaries and is simple to describe. Literature shows that many problems arise with such seemingly simple theories however. Firstly, Regan mentions that the creation of precise thresholds for the various endangered categories is of little use unless there is ‘scientifically accurate data to allow the various distinctions to be drawn’ (Regan, Colyvan, & Burgman, 2000, p. 103). And, because of the fugitive nature of wild animals, the indefinite geographical domain they inhabit and inadequate animal-counting technology, such accuracy is rarely possible. South Africa currently has only few thorough counting mechanisms, such as registries or monitors and technologies, in place to do so. This either leads to misclassification or to an inability to classify on the basis of scarcity. Regan states that this may partially be resolved by classifying ‘on the safe side’, although this would invest a lot of trust in the involved administrators as well as creating two new sub-categories: ‘definitely endangered’ and ‘perhaps endangered’ (ibid.). Related to this is that the theory behind cut-off point seems impossible to validate. The complexity of life is very difficult to quantify. Sainsbury shows that borderline cases will be disadvantaged by strong cut-off points. Adding or removing a single member to or from this

category may shift the animal's status from endangered to non-endangered (Sainsbury, 1995). Species with a population of X+1 or Y-1 fall into different categories and will be treated accordingly. IUCN says the following about this:

...there is no clear line that separates threatened and non-threatened species. There is in fact a continuum, and we have to choose appropriate points at which to divide one group from another (IUCN, 1996, p. intro 17).

The conservation body thus identifies the problem of crisp categories with rigid boundaries, but does not distinguish an alternative: it 'has to' choose appropriate cut-off points.

Categories of threat take on a seemingly opposite philosophy and regard wildlife as species that are rivals to humans. The idea here is that wildlife harms humans (the privileged species) and their livelihoods by causing damage to our food security or our physical safety. Species that are perceived to pose a significant threat to humans in any manner were in South Africa categorized as vermin and could be shot, while now policy speaks of problem-animals or damage-causing animals. With the prevalence of mega fauna and large predators, South African discussions on such threatening animals are aggressive. A polarized political debate is created by utilization-minded farmers on the one side and conservation-minded officials and activists on the other. The difficulty here is to define what threat is and what level of threat is acceptable in an increasingly populated world.

Categories such as indigenous, foreign, alien, invasive and exotic fall under what I call *categories of origin*. Since 2007, the Department of Environmental Affairs has attempted to enforce regulations that comment on the geographical origin of species, although at the time of writing implementation has not been successful. Enormous category systems are the result of such policies of which the following table shows a snippet:

| No. | Nature | Scientific Name | Common Name | Category | Regulation |
|------|-------------|-----------------------|---------------|----------------|---|
| 123. | Alien in SA | Sus scrofa | Feral pig | 1b | controlled as part of specific programme |
| 128. | Alien in SA | Felis catus | Cat, domestic | 1b for islands | controlled as part of specific programme on islands |
| 155. | Alien in SA | Tragelaphus derbianus | Eland | 3 | regulated by activity |

| | | | | | |
|------|------------------|---|----------------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| 156. | Alien in SA | Erythrocebus | Patas Monkey | 1a in KZN | compulsory control in KZN |
| 161. | Alien in SA | Tragelaphus imberbis | Lesser Kudu | 1a | compulsory control |
| 165. | Indigenous | Connochaetes gnou | Wildebeest, black | 2 | regulated by area |
| 197 | Hybrid | Tragelaphus oryx x Tragelaphus strepsiceros | Eland x Greater Kudu | 1a | compulsory control |
| 200. | Hybrid | Unless listed elsewhere, all hybrids with at least one indigenous parents | Hybrids | 1a | compulsory control |
| 319. | Alien outside SA | Alcelaphus buselaphus | Red hartebeest | 0 | Prohibited to import |

Figure 6.5: Excerpt of Invasive Species Listing in South Africa (DEAT 2009)

Besides belligerent-sounding labels such as ‘alien in, or outside South Africa’, the framework of incentives that lies beneath these categories (marked by various category numbers, each having their own meanings and regulatory measures) demonstrates that in general indigenous animals are to be preserved, while foreign species may be and in some cases ought to be removed. The geographical boundaries that discriminate between alien and invasive are mostly based on political boundaries and are highly questionable.¹⁰⁰ These boundaries are not only national, the classification ‘invasive’ is created to distinguish animals that are from the Republic but are not in the correct region.

As stated before the underlying definitions matter. In this case for instance, the Alien Invasive Species regulations (NEMBA Alien and Invasive Species Regulations, 19 July 2013), which provides knowledge on which species are ‘prohibited aliens’, is fleshed out by a section on restricted activities which includes:

- (a) import into the Republic, including introducing from the sea, any specimen ;
- (b) to have in possession or exercising physical control over any specimen;
- (c) to grow, breed or in any other way propagate any specimen, or cause it to multiply;

¹⁰⁰ see for example Alien Invasive Species draft 4, 2009

- (d) to convey, move or otherwise translocate any specimen; or
- (e) to sell or otherwise trade in, buy, receive, give, donate or accept as a gift, or in any way acquire or dispose of any specimen.¹⁰¹

The idea behind such legislation is thus to prevent aliens from entering South Africa, to prevent invasive species from access to other regions of the country and to control those species that have committed a geographical breach. Ontological questions on the definition of species origins and, again, the nature of harm have arisen and are posed especially by those game producers who stock and breed the ‘wrong’ species. How can one define what an animal’s original distribution is? What date is chosen to represent ‘original distribution’ and for what reasons? Why use human political borders to determine nature’s origins? What to do with unharmed aliens? The story of a lechwe-breeder provides ample insight in this type of process.

Jim Merchant, one of my respondent’s in the Eastern Cape, has a relatively small plot of land, 4000 ha on which for the last 30 years he built up the biggest herd of lechwe in South Africa, maybe the world. Now the NEMBA Biodiversity Act has come into play, he faces risk of losing this herd and is upset about the new lechwe’s classification as an alien animal.

Jim originally had a farm in the eastern region of the Eastern Cape, but it was confiscated by the Nationalist Party in the mid 70s to increase the size of the former Ciskei, a homeland designated for Xhosa’s under apartheid. He lost his citrus trees and was relocated to Adelaide, where he developed a soft spot for lechwe. The previous owner of the land had obtained these animals from the Pretoria Zoo and originally from Zambia and were put there by the previous owner.

The neighbours were not too amused by Jim when he started selling his lechwe bulls as trophies to foreign hunters as they found it strange to invest in wildlife in some of the country’s prime cattle country. Also, they thought his operation would attract extra vermin, problem animals such as jackals and caracals, because they suspected him of not doing enough predator control. Howard, according to wildlife legislation put up fences of 2.40 m so that the lechwe could not escape from his farm and slowly but surely ventured into the safari business. He introduced feed supplementation including first grade lucerne, game blocks and cubes, balanced his browsers and grazers and took into account the lechwe’s ability to utilise grass species often unpalatable to other animals. He rapidly increased his herd to over 400. Although he now has more than 30 species of wildlife, including giraffe and ostrich, that can be observed and hunted, but the Lechwe is still his main unique selling point, especially to hunters from Spain and the US. As he says, ‘The lechwe sell our hunts for us. If you go into the record books, you’ll see a large proportion of the lechwe shot in the Eastern Cape are

¹⁰¹ NEMBA Alien and Invasive Species Regulations, 19 July 2013, p. 14

ours'. The bulls are shot for 2600 dollars a piece, resulting in significant income, but it's the 100 live lechwe for sale annually that attract buyers from across the country and generates significant money. You see, Jim's herd, which was selectively bred to produce Lechwe with massive trophy horns have become the trophy standard in SA.

Today, the lechwe face an uncertain future due to legislation formulated by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), which aims at regulating and controlling the sale, movement and utilisation of alien or non-endemic wildlife by a strict regulatory permit system. And Lechwe, coming from Zambia, have been appointed as aliens. According to Jim and all other game farmers I spoke to, the anticipation of this Alien and Invasive Species policy resulted in a crash in demand and prices, not only for lechwe. 'We've always caught between 70 to 100 live lechwe a year, which were sold to game ranchers. I used to load lechwe for R15 000 a piece live – but it has dropped to R5 000 in the past four to five years,' says Jim. 'When the DEAT said it didn't want exotics, I lost over R1 million in four lechwe orders – people just cancelled them.'

So, Jim and other farmers from the Secsicom platform have been taking action. After a strong lobby by the wildlife industry, no concrete answer has been given by Eastern Cape government yet, although the AIS regulations have been delayed until further notice. Furthermore, the neighbouring province, the Western Cape, held a forum meeting with CapeNature, game-industry stakeholders and provincial government in June this year in which it was decided that most alien game species are allowed to be imported and translocated throughout the province. The lechwe, and with it all other 'aliens' reaching as far as Indian Thar, Scandinavian Moose and Indian Tigers, may thus soon be officially classified as utilizable species throughout South Africa.

Although it is questionable to make economic ideas leading in wildlife regulations, the alien-debate brings out a key deterministic of wildlife policy. That is, that categories such as alien or indigenous are to be neatly defined by definite properties. By producing more knowledge on them, we suppose that we have more grip on these entities and can control them in a better manner. Hacking shows that it is not quite like that (Hacking, 2007, p. 289). The knowledge we produce about aliens interacts with the categorized themselves. As the categorized interact with their label and with the category theory throughout the institutional system, the classifications may not signify the same species anymore. They have shifted, they are 'moving targets'. They are influenced by what Hacking has called the 'looping effect' (Hacking 2007, p. 286). One may say that there have always been aliens in South Africa, but because the definition and parameters underlying the category constantly change, it is more accurate to state that aliens are moving targets. Foucault calls this 'historical nominalism' and points out

that even though there were plenty of same-sex acts in ancient Athens - with complex codes about what was right and wrong - (Foucault, 1970b, p. 295), we must be careful to call this 'homosexuality'. A homosexual, according to Foucault, is a kind of person that exists only in a particular historical and social setting. We must be wary of such historical nominalism in analysing for instance *aliens* – even though the historical nominal alien has existed for some time, the knowledge and categorized that relate to the kind *aliens* have been shifting since the term first arose in official institutions. As Lechwes and their ecosystems have been adapting to each other since their release in the republic, there is a case to make for more fluidity in the policy categories.

Fourthly, I distinguish *categories of preference*. The perceived aesthetical value, utilization value, religious value or the intellect of certain species influences environmental policy (Gehring & Ruffing, 2008; Harllee et al., 2009). In South Africa charismatic species such as elephants, rhinoceroses and lions, are regulated and protected specifically by policies that separate them from other animals. Lions for instance are regulated by specific policy that says they may be bred but are not to be sold in the first 24 months of their lives and elephant culling is severely restricted even though environmentalists agree that the overpopulation of elephants causes serious threats to South Africa's public parks. This kind of reasoning works in an opposite way too: wild dogs, which are frequently reported to be on the brink of extinction, do not receive regulatory attention. This is by some (game farmers but also conservationists) attributed to their aggressive and malodorous nature, as well as being unpopular amongst visitors. One wildlife representative told me 'wild dogs were not graced by Disney, so who knows about these guys? And who cares?' (Interview G.Steiner, 2009).

What we see in these classifications is that wildlife policy is principally essentialist and bases species as a whole. Official animal taxonomies demonstrate the comfort of perceiving the world through an objectivist lens. Despite being exposed to complex understandings of species through modern taxonomies, various studies report on the simplistic views that wildlife policies have on the species-concept. In many cases, species in environmental policy are treated as 'discrete entities under a traditional typological approach emphasizing physical characteristics' (Hill, 1993, p. 254 on the US Endangered Species Act; Regan & Colyvan, 2000 on IUCN categories; Regan et al., 2000). In the process of cutting complexity, public policy takes on an essentialist stance, which employs crisp boundaries and categories. This should be reviewed, according to Hill, in light of widespread contemporary ideas on the necessity to preserve 'a particular snapshot' of nature. This snapshot ideology bypasses and disregards the main principal of evolution, namely, the unstatic fluidity of nature (ibid.). An apparent paradox

then is that scientific principals are highly regarded in policy-debates, whilst modern biological findings are, usually because of their complexity, not followed in the implementation of environmental policy. By analyzing the categorization of wildlife in South Africa, one of the questions this work raises is whether this crisp form of category-making is inevitable in public policy. Is it necessary to implement classical Boolean sets with values of 0 or 1, in the case of a natural world that seems to supply graded sets, which are fuzzy, complex, varied and all but crisp?

Institutions: the Convergence of Legislation

With the enactment of the new Constitution, South Africa's legal system was brought into a new era. Distinctively progressive, the constitution provides South Africa with a twofold 'environmental right': the right to have an environment that is not harmful for human well-being, as well as the right to have an environment which is to be protected from degradation (Kidd, 2008, p. 18). The constitution is unclear on what these principles mean or how they should be interpreted and for this reason an environmental policy development process was commenced.¹⁰² The result of this process was the overarching National Environmental Management Act of 1998 (NEMA).

In the process of drafting the constitution and this environmental framework, South Africa opened up its borders to foreign markets, people, legal consultants, and policy advisors. While the new Republic's endorsement of influential international economic treaties is often remembered (Bassett, 2008b; Bond, 2000; Habib, 2008), the international environmental conventions it signed are less often scrutinized (see box). Ranging from legally binding treaties to more informal instruments such as memoranda of understanding, these treaties have had a guiding impact on the government's environmental goals, especially in terms of human-nature relations dealing with ownership and the utilisation of wild things.

Of these conventions, the CBD and CITES play the most important role in South African politics and the framing of ideas about what the Wild is. By comparing these two international treaties with national frameworks, their relationships become clear.

¹⁰² CONNEPP: Consultative National Environmental Policy Process

| Date Signed | Convention | Aims |
|--------------------|---|---|
| CITES 1975 | Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna | To ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival and it accords varying degrees of protection to more than 33,000 species of animals and plants. |
| CMS 1991 | Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals | To strictly protect and conserve or restore the natural habitats of endangered migratory species (176 species in 2011). |
| CBD 1995 | Convention on Biological Diversity | To conserve biodiversity; sustainably use its components; and share benefits arising from genetic resources fair and equitably. |
| WHC 1997 | World Heritage Convention | To protect natural and cultural heritage sites |

Figure 6.6: International Environmental Conventions South Africa is signatory to

The Convention on Biological Diversity, to begin with, defines the Wild in the following manner as biological diversity that ought to be sustained and shared:

Convention of Biological Diversity, Article 1

The objectives of this Convention, to be pursued in accordance with its relevant provisions, are:

- (i) the conservation of biological diversity,
- (ii) the sustainable use of its components; and
- (iii) the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies, taking into account all rights over those resources and to technologies, and by appropriate funding.

In South Africa, the conservation of the Wild was guided primarily by the White Paper on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biological Diversity (DEAT 1997). This policy document was informed largely by the commitments that South Africa assumed when become a signatory to the CBD in 1995 (Deat 2009: 60). The National Biodiversity Act (NEMBA), which fleshes out biodiversity issues within NEMA's framework,¹⁰³ follows this line of reasoning and aligns three principles:

¹⁰³ As well as the World Heritage Convention Act (Act 49 of 1999) and the Protected Areas Act (Act 57).

NEMBA

2. The objectives of this Act are:

- (a) within the framework of the NEMA to provide for –
 - (i) the management and conservation of biological diversity within the Republic and of the components of such biological diversity;
 - (ii) the use of indigenous biological resources in a sustainable manner; and
 - (iii) the fair and equitable sharing amongst stakeholders of benefits arising from bioprospecting involving indigenous biological resources;
- (b) to give effect to ratifies international agreements relating to biodiversity which are binding on the republic.

The comparison shows a close translation of the CBD to NEMBA and demonstrates that international environmental conventions have a decisive impact on the framing of South Africa's institutional structures. Critics have noted that the CBD, and thus also South Africa's government, firstly:

... codifies a dominant perspective of nature as capital through its emphasis on sustainable use initiatives that, when translated into practice, means the use of *in situ* biodiversity to realize profit through the conversion of use value to exchange value; second, it positions biodiversity as genetic material available for exchange in a global market; and third, it explicitly recognizes that states have a sovereign right to determine access to genetic resources in their territories and to allocate the benefits from the use of those resources (MacDonald, 2010b, p. 526).

The CBD clearly makes a choice between the 'nature as capital' narrative instead of for example a 'nature as intrinsic good' narrative. The choice to understand 'nature as capital' has consequences, not only for natural entities, but also for the organisational structures through which nature is managed. MacDonald for instance shows how commodity-stimulating principles that are implicit in the CBD have led to organizational restructuring at the CBD's annual meetings. At Conferences of the Parties (COP) meeting for instance, preferential treatment is given to private sector parties by including them in official discursive spaces in the Conference as well as in intergovernmental meetings and national delegation missions (CBD Secretariat 2006, p. 260 in MacDonald 2010). Because South Africa has equally framed all biodiversity as capital that can and should be utilized, a similar process of organisational

restructuring is occurring in South Africa on a national level. Therefore, in the last few years there has been a restructuring of power and a tug of war whether wilderness and wildlife is to be handled by conservation officials, by economic and agricultural officials, or by others:

| Sector | Responsibilities |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Water and Environmental Affairs | Environmental Impact Management, biodiversity conservation, marine and coastal management, forests and forestry |
| Tourism | Tourism facilities, advocacy of nature |
| Agriculture | Agricultural Resources, pests, damage-causing animals, farm feeds, agricultural remedies, animal breeding, veterinary issues |
| Land Affairs | Development facilitation, principles governing land development, land use |
| Provincial and Local Government | Municipal planning, integrated development plans, municipal service delivery, disaster management |
| Science and Technology | Research support |
| Arts and Culture | National heritage, including world heritage sites |
| Education | Education and research |
| Health | Disease control |
| Transport | Maritime law, harbours, translocation, export, import |
| Justice | Gun licensing and regulation |

Figure 6.7: departments that yield environmental management responsibilities

I will return to this dynamic in the following chapter, after highlighting a second international convention that has led to significant institutional reform in the field of wildlife politics; CITES. This convention determines and ensures the trade of live animals as well as their body parts and is of particular interest to the internationally oriented wildlife industry. With its ability to restrict the import and export of wildlife bodies, the administration of CITES has considerable economic control over South Africa's wildlife economy. The organisation yields pressure to reform institutions and organisational fields by upgrading or downgrading countries in terms of their compliance to its requirements. UNEP describes the incentives for countries to revise their legislation to implement CITES as follows:

...in addition to shame (and the desire to be a Party in good standing), a State with inadequate legislation and which does not make good progress to strengthen that legislation could be subject to a Standing Committee recommendation to suspend trade.¹⁰⁴

A conversation with a government official of the department of environmental affairs (DEA) who represents South Africa at CITES gives more insight in this process from a national perspective.

DEA: We do not have national legislation for the implementation of CITES. Therefore we've been included in Category 2 of the CITES legislation project, which means we have legislation but it's not adequate. In January this year (2010) we got a written caution from the CITES standing committee saying that we need to adopt national legislation otherwise we'll be in trouble.

DS: Will there be sanctions?

DEA: They will take sanctions if we can't prove at the meeting in July that we've taken steps. That's why I need this draft published for comments.

DS: Will the CITES amendment mean that the provinces cannot change policies?

DEA: Yes, so then their ordinance will not be implemented anymore for CITES-reasons. There's a big debate on... [Interruption: introduction new intern] ...we always said the provinces can have stricter ordinances than the nation has. If we say you can hunt a lion in a cage, the province can say you can't hunt a lion in a cage. But now actually, when it came to elephants, one of the provinces wanted to make stricter amendments. We got a legal opinion and it said: actually, no they can't. That's a debate. We'll see what's going to happen to that (senior representative Department of Environmental Affairs 2010).

The division of countries that do or do not meet CITES requirements is skewed along traditional North-South divisions, by which Europe and North America have more political clout to pressure Southern countries to create institutional change. South Africa, as one of the Southern countries, is required by CITES to change institutions, strengthen national legislation and implement specific means such as a national database to administer wildlife (Mail & Guardian, 2008). In this process collectively organised international actors can generate serious pressure to change institutional and organisational settings to regulate and frame the wild.

The process does not only relate to national government however. It brings about intra-national contestations and tension as it involves a restructuring of power and resources.

¹⁰⁴ <http://www.unep.org/dec/onlinemanual/Enforcement/NationalLawsRegulations/Resource/Default.aspx>

Wildlife permitting for instance, which accounts for millions of Rands each year, is currently being reviewed and possibly shifted from the provinces to Pretoria to streamline policy in terms of CITES. Officials I spoke to hinted that local talks about the restructuring of wildlife policy were above all about the redistribution of government revenue. ‘Money is at the base of this, you know, track the money and you’ll understand the issue’, one national officer said (Interview DEA officer, Pretoria 2010). Furthermore, Cousins et al. write that provinces feel that their local expertise to govern nature and make related decisions is ignored by national (and international) government. National officials on the other hand worry about ‘the readiness of the provinces to implement the legislation in terms of manpower, knowledge, a lack of motivation to understand and implement the regulations, and also regarding cooperation because of a greater workload’ (Cousins et al., 2010, p. 7).

For the time being, while national environmental legislation frameworks are sharpened and drafted, nine different sets of provincial departments legislate environmental policy. Respondents commonly refer to this as the ‘9+1 system’, which stands for the nine provincial departments (although in the case of Mpumalanga, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal the function of biodiversity conservation is performed by separate organs of the state and not the provincial department) plus the national framework. This system is executed as one of two types of ministerial governance in South Africa that determine cooperation between national and provincial government departments:

1. National legislative competencies, in which provinces execute what the central government decides, or
2. Concurrent competencies, in which the provincial government is free to create its own policy, and interpret central policy, as long as it does not counteract with central government.

Environmental regulations are (still) concurrent legislative competences in terms of the constitution, which means that provinces have the freedom to promulgate legislation dealing with the utilisation of wildlife. Provincial policies function as guidelines, but when there is unclarity on their aims, the constitution ‘empowers the national government to exercise overriding powers’ (Hunting, 2005, p. 25). The classification of animals, exemptions for hunting, transport and fencing regulations can thus be different in each province, even though international conventions dictate that there cannot be too much freedom for interpretation.

The National framework, NEMA and NEMBA, which is to serve as guidelines for provincial legislation provides much room for interpretation as it is imprecise and lacks

tangible policy options to manage nature. NEMBA for instance describes at length how the National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) should be presided over and how botanical gardens are to be administered, without providing guidelines how nature should be ‘utilized’, ‘in a sustainable manner’, and ‘shared equitably’. According to national biodiversity officials, there ‘is a great gap’ particularly concerning the hunting, keeping and selling of wildlife (Interview G.Thompson, 2009). As a result, ever since NEMBA’s enactment in 2004, norms and standards, guidelines, and policy frameworks are unfolding to administer human-wildlife interactions (although few are fully adopted).¹⁰⁵

Until these national guidelines are developed, provincial officials uphold provincial legislation, which often stems from Apartheid times. At the time of writing, the following pre-1994 legislation is still in place:

- Nature Conservation Ordinance 8 of 1969 (Orange Free State) is applicable in the Free State.
- Nature Conservation Ordinance 15 of 1974 (Natal) still applies in Kwazulu-Natal.
- Nature and Environmental Conservation Ordinance 19 of 1974 (Cape), enforced in the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and parts of North West.
- Nature Conservation Ordinance 12 of 1983 (Transvaal) still applies in Gauteng
- Nature Conservation Act 10 of 1987 (Ciskei) still in effect in the Eastern Cape
- Decree 9 of 1992 (Transkei) still applies in the Eastern Cape
- Kwazulu Nature Conservation Act 8 of 1975 still applies in Kwazulu Natal.¹⁰⁶

As a result, the Eastern Cape currently has three valid pieces of nature conservation legislation besides the novel National framework: the Cape Ordinance, the former Transkei Decree and the former Ciskei Conservation Act, even though these former Homelands and this Province were abolished in 1994. The multiplicity of legal documents has lead to confusion amongst all stakeholders.¹⁰⁷ The conflicting policy measures that arise are said to create major obstacles:

¹⁰⁵ The main documents that have been under discussion are Threatened Or Protected Species (TOPS, 2008), Alien and Invasive Species Regulations AIS, 2013), Damage Causing Animals (DCA, 2010) and Norms and Standards concerning Hunting, Elephant management and Rhino poaching. All were discussed and crafted in the period that the fieldwork for this study was done (2008-2011). In generally, these policies divide biodiversity into species, re-divide these species into clusters such as ‘damage causing animals’, ‘threatened’ or ‘invasive’ species and subsequently provide rules how to treat these species.

¹⁰⁶ Since 1994 two provinces have enacted nature conservation themselves – Mpumalanga and Kwazulu-Natal.

¹⁰⁷ For instance, African wild dogs are currently listed as an Endangered Species through the national TOPS, they are ‘specially protected’ through the Natal ordinance, ‘protected’ by the Transvaal Ordinance, and not mentioned in other provincial legislation (Kidd, 2008, p. 117). In effect, this means that wild dogs can be hunted freely in the Western-, Northern-, Eastern Cape and Orange Free State, although it is restricted to hunt, transport or trade wild dogs in the rest of South Africa.

‘there are 32 sets of regulations for game farmers that you have to abide to, 32 different sets of legislation! Those mean 15 from conservation and 10 from agriculture’ (Interview A.Pretorius, 2008). A 2006 survey amongst 13 wildlife utilizers reveals twenty-four disturbances of which eighteen were directly or indirectly related to government policy (Langholz & Kerley, 2006, p. 20). Pasquini et al. write that more than half the private landowners they interviewed in the Karoo expressed negative judgement towards conservation officials and viewed the department as “‘heavy-handed,” unwilling to recognize landowners as valid and equal partners in conservation, and insensitive to landowner needs and unable to meet these needs appropriately’ (Pasquini, Cowling, et al., 2010, p. 474). An independent panel that advised the government about game farming suggest that inconsistent policies may be at the root of some of these complaints:

There are already extensive regulations in place at a provincial level governing the hunting industry, but these are often inconsistent, outdated and fragmented. There is a serious gap in terms of the overall coherence of the system nationally, and a unified framework is needed to create the context within which provincial regulations can function. The Panel recommends that uniformity is established through a set of national norms and standards which will guide the implementation of both national and provincial policy and legislation (Hunting, 2005, p. iv).

More serious than confusing is that the mentioned conservation policy hold many implicit racially prejudiced statements. For example, the Nature Conservation Ordinance 8 of 1969 (a document that was mentioned in the history chapter already) exempts ‘the owner of land on which the game is hunted or a white employee’ from the need to request hunting permits.¹⁰⁸ Provincial conservation bodies state however that they ‘are waiting until regulations of the Biodiversity Act have been developed before updating provincial legislation that deals with hunting, in order to ensure consistency with the Biodiversity Act’ (Interview J.Grobler, 2009). Because of such situations, many provinces and hunting organizations have developed their own informal institutions (Burgener, Greyling, & Rumsey, 2005, p. 54).

¹⁰⁸ Free State Nature Conservation Ordinance 8 of 1969

Categorizers and Categorized, or, can the Wild speak?

We see then that official categories are much more than neutral labels. Categories are infused with meaning by humans. A growing body of social science studies these dynamics and the importance of category-analysis (Rao, Monin, & Durand, 2005; Shepherd, 2009; Yanow, 2003; Yanow & van der Haar, 2013). These publications are concerned with social categories and their relationships to human identity. Despite the original challenges it poses, a shortage of research looks into taxonomies that are generated to sort non-humans. A major distinction between animal and human categories is that animals are somewhat incapable of entering discussions on their classifications. The South African poet D.J. Opperman reminds us that a buffalo does not ask questions about ontology, metaphysics, or about tomorrow.

Die buffel ken geen metafisika:
hy soek die soetgras
en die kuil,
hy sal die kalf karnuffel,
horings in sy vyand gra,
die koei besnuffel,
teen hael gaan skuil,
maar geen vrae oor môre vra -
die buffel ken geen metafisika.¹⁰⁹

It is humans who write poems, ask questions, and classify animals. This implies that animal categories are inevitably built up by *one-way* relationships. Humans decide on the policy and categories that affect wildlife. It also implies that humans purport various animal meanings, but an authentic claim to the positioning of animals within a human category-system is impossible. Any animal classification system is necessarily administered in a top-down, anthropocentric manner. Having said this, animals certainly influence category discussions and do so in various manners. Hobson notes that animals have influence because they are tied up in the heterogeneous networks that constitute political life through ‘the billions of dollars and animal bodies that circulate the globe, exported for eating, experimentation, breeding and companionship; and the multi-level frameworks that (attempt to) regulate their movement and conservation’ (Hobson, 2007, p. 263). Specific species traits, such as the ability to adapt to environments or the ability to harm other species (including humans) are examples of

¹⁰⁹DJ Opperman, Dolosse 1963: The buffalo does not know metaphysics.

characteristics that influence policy-making. For instance, the heights of wildlife fences that create such large divisions in South Africa's countryside are based on specific species' ability to jump. My respondents pointed out many cases of wildlife adapting to fences (and other human artefacts) and by finding ways to render them useless they entered dialogues with both farmers as policy makers.

In most reflections on wildlife policy however, (collectives of) persons interpret and assert animal claims and thereby speak out for the categorized. It is humans who claim animals to be provisions, garments, vermin, leisure resources, wildlife commodities, jobs for the poor or intrinsic beings that must not be managed. Official policy reflects on these meanings of animals to society. Because of the conflicting nature of these claims, categories are constructed and destructed in the process of defining and redefining animals. This arrangement and shifting of animal meanings works through a very human process of political skirmish that will be elaborated on in the following chapter and in which 'power tells the outcome' (Starr, 1992, p. 155).

Abridgement

In 'the Other Tiger' the celebrated poet Borges hunts for animal meanings by attempting to capture a tiger. The first is 'innocent, ruthless, bloodstained, sleek, it wanders through its forest and its day, printing a track along the muddy banks, of sluggish streams whose names it does not know' (Borges, Monegal, & Reid, 1981). Paradoxically, the poet recognizes that this animal of flesh and bones changes as soon as it is confined to text. The animal of flesh and blood escapes him and becomes a second tiger, 'by the act of giving it a name, by trying to fix the limits of its world, it becomes a fiction not a living beast, not a tiger out roaming the wilds of earth' (ibid.). Borges knows that he cannot go beyond language, beyond human understanding and textual reproduction of the animal and will therefore never fully capture the tiger as itself. Yet, he continues his 'vague, unreasonable, and ancient quest [...] pursuing through the hours, another tiger, the beast not found in verse' (ibid).

Like Borges, this chapter hunts for wild animals and the ways they can or cannot be represented on paper. It does so specifically by studying the political reduction of natural complexity. It focuses on the creation of wildlife categories which are 'officially adopted or approved by the state and incorporated into law and administration' (Starr 1992) for the means of constructing and controlling complex and myriad entities into populations. The chapter is structured around a model for 'making up species', which makes it possible to study categories

within a broader societal framework. The model consists of five aspects; the category names, knowledge, institutions, the categorizers, and the categorized.

The way in which classificatory names have real effects is in the formulation or word-choice of the category. A 'golden gnu' sounds more exclusive and costly than a 'common gnu' and an 'invasive species' has a different ring to it than an 'exotic species'. Names carry meaning to specific users. Oak trees frequently find themselves to be labelled as timber in policy, complex ecosystems become mere land and some entities become aliens. Academics in the field of animal rights show the same applies to beef, pork and venison concerning parts of animal bodies 'we eat beef, not bull...pork, not pig...' and mutton, not sheep (Mitchell, 2006; Singer, 1995; Stibbe, 2001). The labels hunter, naturalist, poacher, butcher or slaughterer can all refer to similar deeds, but have very different connotations. A person or group of persons may associate to the label hunter, but not to the label slaughterer, while others may call self-imposed hunters slaughterers. Category-naming is thus an important part of identity-processes, while strife surrounding label categories is a vital process of category-making. Les Mitchell, analyzing the use of names in the South African popular magazine 'Farmer's Weekly', has called this reductionist process 'metonymy', the description of something by only one particular aspect or the reduction to a one-dimensional entity (Mitchell, 2006, p. 54). A similar process is the use of mass nouns instead of count nouns to describe animals (Stibbe, 2001, p. 151) Game farmers and safari tourists commonly state 'We saw giraffe, elephant and kudu', instead of using the plural form of the animals. According to Stibbe this strips animals of their individuality 'with the ideological assumption that each animal is just a replaceable representative of a category' (ibid). To control species within political strategies, species are thereby classified, simplified and renamed according to the interest that they serve. Names and categories that are created by states, Scott believes, do not represent actual social processes in society and are not even intended to do so (J. C. Scott, 1998, p. 3). They represent only that slice of complex reality the state is interested in. For government the appearance of impartiality and fairness is important and scientific categories or references are often used to instigate a type of power of association. A mechanism that is employed hereof in relation to state-categories is what Yanow and Van der Haar name 'a scientific aura' (Yanow & van der Haar, 2013, p. 250). A government's reaction to the breeding of golden gnus makes the point. According to government it can 'lead to undesirable levels of inbreeding or, still worse, hybridization of subspecies; significant impacts on the habitat can be caused by the introduction of undesirable invasive or alien game taxa and deliberate modification of indigenous vegetation' (K. Hamman, Vrahimis, & Blom, 2003). The association here is to biological

taxonomies and discourse. Government narratives on wildlife do not speak of animals or nature here, but of habitat modification by alien game taxa. Due to the appearance of impartiality, science has heavily impregnated the sphere of policy-making. Impartial and objective reasoning that is ‘based on facts’, is generally accepted as a powerful rationale in society’s governance. It is for this reason that scientific methodology is utilized in the process of categorization. To evaluate category-systems, government usually applies the practice of quantitative analysis. This practice is distinguished as an important concept of order, but also has effect on the shaping of categories. In a world in which quantitative science is regarded highly, the counting of entities can serve as a powerful rationale for creating or recreating category-systems. Whether this is done by government, scientists or others, counting provides a strong methodology which possesses a ‘scientific aura’ and may strengthen animal claims (Yanow van der Haar 2010). When one looks at scientific authorities however, it appears that various theories on species categories exist and compete with one and other. The mere possibility that different legitimate taxonomies exist points to a critique on objectivist categories. Official taxonomies are thereby somewhat like the Linnean taxonomy. Linnaeus and his followers used the typological species concept, which goes back to the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, and held essential properties for all sorts¹¹⁰. It may thereby be logical, but as Mayr notes, it ‘wrongly infers an underlying essence from morphological similarity’ (1984:13 in Erefshky 1994). The Linnaean category-system aims to represent all the separate species for the naturalist to place them in the correct ‘pigeonhole’ (Hill 1993: 248). The system is thereby platonic, in the sense that each pigeonhole reflects the ideal of a species. With the rise of an evolutionary biological perspective came the understanding that not all biological categories necessarily contain essential properties. Before long, it became implausible to assume, ‘a priori, as objectivist metaphysics does, that all nature is structured by classical categories’ (Lakoff, 1987, p. 160). Maybe Darwin himself hinted at this when he stated:

It is really laughable to see what different ideas are prominent in various naturalists' minds, when they speak of ‘species’; in some, resemblance is everything and descent of little weight — in some, resemblance seems to go for nothing, and Creation the reigning idea — in some, sterility an unfailing test, with others it is not worth a farthing. It all comes, I believe, from trying to define the indefinable (Darwin 1887, vol. 2, 88.)

¹¹⁰This design also made celestial sense as God was seen to have created species with an eternal essence. He did this once and for all and after creating earth, ‘no new species could arise [...], the diversity of life could never increase’ (Erefshky 1994: 188).

Policy categories, by aiming to define the indefinable, come up with definite and inflexible species lists. Whereas in academia hundreds of definitions of an elephant can exist, in terms of policy one has to lay down one set of definitions. These lists can be changed by policy motions, but are generally inflexible and risk, as Borges found, that by trying to fix the limits, wildlife categories become a fiction: ‘not a living beast, not a tiger out roaming the wilds of earth’ (Borges, Monegal, et al., 1981). This ‘fiction’ leaves room for political skirmish, which will be the focus of the following and final chapter.



The Minister of Environmental Affairs has now disclosed that during 2010:

- 20 short-horned kudu became long-horned kudu
- 30 black gnus became blue gnus
- 50 black-and-white nguni cows became white-and-black nguni cows
- 60 white-and-black nguni cows became black-and-white nguni cows
- No sheep became goats
- And no goats became sheep¹¹¹

¹¹¹ Michael Chapman's poetical response to the author's presentation at the CCRRI Symposium on Classification, (UKZN, 2011) with an adaption of his 1985 poem 'The chameleon Dance' in which the author commented on race changes in South Africa and after summing up a list concluded that 'No blacks became white, and no whites became black'.

Chapter VII Fifty Shades of Green

In the early nineteen nineties a group of white farmers, black farm dwellers, university students and a Zulu chief came together outside a company called Thor Chemicals to protest against its illegal mercury disposals. Carrying signs saying ‘Apartheid Divides, the Environment Unites’, a new kind of protest was voiced (Koch, 1995). In the years that followed, Apartheid and environmental abuse were often equated as one and the same as environmentalism ‘rode a wave of euphoria’ (Carruthers, 2006). ANC stalwarts such as Albie Sachs linked the struggle against Apartheid to the plea for a clean environment, asserting that the prisoners on Robben Island planted as many flowers and grass as they could. ‘When we say *Mayibuye Afrika*’ or ‘come back Africa’, he stated, ‘we are calling for the return of legal title but also for the restoration of land, the forest and the atmosphere; the greening of our country is basic to its healing’ (Black, Ross, Swatuk, & Anthony, 1995, p. 11). Mr. Sachs was a leading judicial expert in the ANC and was involved in the drafting of the constitution, which came to include progressive environmental rights for all. Soon after the transition to a non-racial democratic state, a broad socio-economic program was initiated, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), which had robust environmental pointers. Two years later however, RDP was replaced by GEAR (Growth, Employment, and Redistribution), a neoliberal economic programme that is virtually silent on the environment (Carruthers, 2006, p. 805). Environmental regulations from the previous political dispensation were kept in place and government, pressurized by international conventions, shortly defined nature as capital for the nation. Within this framework, there was still much to configure however. Whereas the adoption of the Game Theft Act was by many understood to be the final chapter in a long institutional process, it actually marked the beginning of ongoing political skirmish about the official definition of nature and the Wild. What can one do with privately owned wildlife? What conservation measures apply? Which species can (not) be owned and does this apply to all provinces? Why can some animals be hunted and others not? Why are there restrictions on the export of wildlife products? Wildlife ownership may be a fact, but most existing institutional frameworks are either silent or lack specifics about human-wildlife relations.

One thing I found particularly striking in my interviews with game farmers were the distraught narratives on wildlife policy and politics. Policy matters to game farmers. When asked about their concerns for the future, game reserve owners in the Eastern Cape answered that ‘among 24 obstacles to medium and long-term sustainability specified by PGRs, three-fourth (n=18) directly or indirectly related to government policy’ (Langholz & Kerley, 2006,

p. 19). In follow-up studies in 2008 and 2011 policy concerns and specifically ‘the perception of a lack of political support, together with governmental instability which discourages international visitors’ were once again highlighted as a major risk factor (Indalo 2011), something that is also expressed in Lorena Pasquini’s work (cf. Pasquini, 2007; Pasquini, Cowling, et al., 2010). This set of perceptions is one of the reasons why the wildlife industry gathers and increasingly organizes itself. As wildlife policy is slowly shifting from being a provincial to a national affair, an emerging ‘organizational field’ (Bourdieu, 1993; Garud, 2008; Hardy & Maguire, 2010) is geographically establishing itself in South Africa’s capitol, Pretoria. The city lies in the economic and political core of the country, in the Gauteng Province, and accommodates the National Ministries as well as the Presidency. Mainly here, a politically transforming government, a proliferating group of wildlife producers, and a collection of social and environmental activists set out to tinker and twitch political machinery to their advantage. They do so by producing texts, narratives, which suggest how to condense the Wild into official classifications. These narratives are voiced in public spaces such as meetings, forums, in the media, and on the internet and are staged in negotiation with other social actors ‘involving power relations and debates over meaning’ (Leach et al., 1999, p. 235).

With the rise of a global discourse on conservation and a national focus on tourism, wildlife categorizers have been defining and redefining the usability of wildlife and have developed disparate and seemingly incommensurable narratives on the Wild. On the one hand, more measures have been promoted to convert environments into capital, and on the other hand rigid conservation framework have been proposed and imposed which interpret nature as an inalienable good that ought to be protected from and for humans. Because of this, government, business and activists regularly fall out with each other and have become polarized in a debate on the management and control over nature. This prompted a process of institutional reform amidst large-scale politico-organizational restructuring. After 1994 the country’s four provinces, which were principally responsible for environmental policy, were repartitioned to nine new ones. National and provincial government departments were forced to reconfigure themselves to establish who had which level of authority and which issues fell under what jurisdiction. Government divisions, such as the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Environmental Affairs, needed to recalibrate in relation to each other. There are now thousands of landowners involved in wildlife trade, tourism, ranching, breeding, taxidermy, fencing, transportation, veterinary sciences et cetera, who grow to be more economically potent, politically vocal and organized. Furthermore, a whole range of non-governmental

environmental organizations, intent on monitoring human interactions with nature, have emerged, synchronized, and speak out where they can. Wildlife politics have all but ceased.

Amongst the collisions, there is also much convergence and alliance. What this chapter shows is that wildlife policy discussions in South Africa reveal a particular alliance between state and capital. Government is implementing and considering measures that allow wildlife producers to self-administer their permits, while private landowners declare themselves to be biodiversity managers. The two negotiate about economic incentives that are being brought into play to reward landowners for their role in biodiversity conservation. With various self-regulatory systems, stewardship programs and fiscal mechanisms to provide ‘a more secure conservation agreement’, the current tendency points towards government deregulation and reregulation concerning conservation. This phenomenon is named as a hallmark of neoliberal policy, which seeks to move outside of the formal apparatus of the state to achieve policy aims through the institutions of civil society and by means of public-private partnerships (Peck & Tickell, 2002). In practice, ‘efforts to develop neoliberal environmental policy have led to endless numbers of “stakeholder forums”, in which to achieve the outcome and effect of market-led environmental governance, we had to avert our eyes from the actual acts of government occurring at a table crowded with bureaucrats’ (Robertson, 2007, pp. 503–4). The public-private alliance should not be regarded as a consensual one however. On the contrary, discussions between the wildlife industry and state officials are often marked by opposing discursive positions. This chapter attempts to show that in this seeming divergence government actors and landowners converge in a continuous politically dynamical process, which excludes other actors such as labour and environmental factions.¹¹² As Nie states, wildlife policy and management decisions do not affect everyone in a similar way (Nie, 2004, p. 227). Rural and underprivileged citizens are likely to be more personally affected than wealthy or urban citizens and I therefore find it indispensable to ask questions ‘pertaining to the scope, structure, and process of wildlife policy: who participates, who doesn’t, and who cares?’ (Nie, 2004, p. 222).

Seeing the production of the wild as an organized political project (MacDonald 2010b), I intend to give insight on shifting power relations concerning the wild by examining the production and consumption of narratives in an emerging organisational field. I focus hereby on one particular field-configuring event (FCE): the wildlife forum, which is a platform that is initiated by government to engage with organizations and discuss human control over wild animals. It is the only platform of its kind and, being staged at a national level, provides an

¹¹² Parts of this chapter have been published in (Snijders 2014).

important discursive space in which government interacts with non-governmental parties. Through its hosting body, the Department of Environmental Affairs, I was invited to attend the quarterly Wildlife Forum during the period 2009-2011. By means of a PAIA-request (Promotion of Access to Information Act), I obtained access to the Forum's minutes and reports in the period 2005-2009. Leading up to the platform meetings, I studied and participated in various meetings that were organized by participants to streamline narratives and strategies. Besides these Forum-related meetings, I also contacted members and actors of the broader organizational field to establish discursive positions, expectations, evaluations and strategies for institutional change.

Studying an FCE: the Wildlife Forum and its membership

A particularly vocal group is that of the wildlife representatives, who in the past grouped themselves provincially (Transvaal Game Ranchers, Eastern Cape Game Management Association etc.), but have now started clustering around South Africa's political capital Pretoria. The South African Game Ranching Organization (SAGRO), which managed to pressurize the Department of Justice to create wildlife ownership laws in the early 1990s but became dormant in the decade afterwards, was reconfigured in 2005 under a new management and a new name: Wildlife Ranching South Africa (WRSA). Government welcomed this body as the official voice of wildlife producers and the former Minister of Agriculture accredited it with being influential to the state's thinking about wildlife in Parliament:

Factors that contributed to a paradigm shift included the report [...] on the South African Wildlife Industry by the National Agricultural Marketing Council as well as the establishment of the Wildlife Ranching Association of South Africa.¹¹³

Hence, the predicaments which game farmers had with government policy did not go unnoticed. In 2005 the Minister of Environmental Affairs Marthinus van Schalkwyk commissioned three panels of experts to study the sector of wildlife utilisation, hunting and ranching (Burgener et al., 2005; Patterson & Khosa, 2005). The shared observations of these documents were that (1) policy, rules and institutions concerning the utilisation of biodiversity are too 'complex and fragmented', (2) communications between government and stakeholders

¹¹³ Question 1485 for Written Reply, National Assembly: Mr. P.J.C. Pretorius (DA) to ask the Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, October 9 2009.

should be improved and (3) local communities should be more involved in the industry as a whole. All three expert documents highlighted that more could be done to grow and enhance the development of capacity in the sector, particularly among previously disadvantaged individuals. Transformation was seen to be ‘slow [while] communities are keen to become involved in the industry. These opportunities need to be made available both on paper and in practice’ (Cousins et al., 2008, p. 51). The expert reports contain few substantial recommendations on how these points should be addressed, although they do suggest the establishment of:

... an appropriate representative wildlife industry forum that should include only the direct stakeholders (wildlife producers, hunters, labour) and which can be used by them as a joint platform from which to engage government and civil society. The forum, government and civil society should launch a collaborative initiative to develop a National Development Strategy and Action Plan for the industry and begin immediately by addressing short-term obstacles such as the hunting legislation (Steenkamp, Marnewick, & Marnewick, 2008, p. 5).

With the advice to create more direct national discussions a new field-configuring event was in the making. A hunting platform had already existed but was disbanded, as one Environmental Affairs stated:

Before there was something called SAPHCOM (the South African Professional Hunters Committee) which had the hunters and the Professional Hunting school directors, PHASA and the provinces. Then at a stage government said, because the wildlife industry was not transformed, it was still a predominantly male, white orientated and it wasn’t a structure that fell under government bodies, such as the working group 1 committee. They didn’t recognize that committee, so when the provincials wanted to attend, it wasn’t approved, because it wasn’t a formal committee. So we had to dismantle SAPHCOM; for a couple of years we tried to get something working again under Working Group One, but it wasn’t successful (Interview A. du Plessis, 2010).

As government started rolling out its new policies, communications between national wildlife representatives and department officials intensified. At this juncture, the recommendations by the Panels of Experts were catalysts for organisational change and the official Wildlife Forum was created in 2005. It was to meet four times annually and was to address deficiencies in communication between the private sector and government (minutes first meeting Wildlife

Forum 28 September 2005). I will use this forum as an FCE case study to explore further the (co)construction of wildlife policy.

FCE Membership: Organizational Boundaries

The composition of the Forum was dissimilar to what was suggested by the Panel of Experts from the start. The platform was recommended to take direct stakeholders including labour, hunters and wildlife producers on board and collaborate as a forum with government and civil society to restructure the industry. Instead, a Wildlife Forum was initiated that is hosted and chaired by the Department of Environmental Affairs, and invites hunting industry organisations that are involved in wildlife production (breeding, ecotourism, professional hunting, predator breeding, translocation, fencing etc), but excludes labour, welfare and civil society stakeholders. When asked why these stakeholders were absent an industry member commented: ‘No, no, they are not real stakeholders. They don’t own anything; it’s not hunters, not landowners’ (Interview A.Pretorius, 2010). Regarding environmental organisations a high-placed official told me:

The big thing is we do not have the jurisdiction to address animal welfare. That is what those organisations talk about, but the Protection of Animals Act falls under Agriculture. We do have people who are animal-rights orientated within the government that try to bring in these things all the time. But we must be careful; if something doesn’t fall under our jurisdiction... why would you touch such a difficult subject? (Interview G.Burger, 2010).

A similar answer was given about labour representatives whose issues are said to fall under the Department of Labour, thereby placing workers and their representatives outside the industry spectre. The environmental and labour organisations I spoke to had not heard of the Forum. At public meetings, environmental society actors expressed being rejected from wildlife-related talks. One NGO-director instructed me at a public discussion on damage causing animals, ‘you go ask here who is invited, and who found out through the grapevine?’ (Interview M.Ross, 2010). I asked a government official how stakeholders are selected for public meetings, and she answered as follows:

Normally we have a list of stakeholders we deal with, like through the Wildlife Forum. Those are our direct stakeholders. What we normally do when it’s a big issue, like with the TOPS (threatened or protected species regulations), is that we invite our stakeholders and say to the

provinces: this is an open workshop. There is no limit to the people that are invited (Interview A. du Plessis, 2009).

This approach gives FCE-members an indirect privileged position. Those who are involved actively participate in discussions, and are also part of a (virtual) discursive network through which invitations for other events are distributed. Non-members may thereby be excluded from main events as well as linked events. Such indirect ‘network-exclusions’ may be crafted arbitrarily (everybody is invited but we don’t send invitations) or actively.

According to the founding documents, the Wildlife Forum can admit more members. During the period I attended the Wildlife Forum two ‘outsiders’ applied to be part of the discussions: an Angling Association and a Veterinary Association. Both were asked to present themselves and were afterwards probed with questions about their jurisdiction, vision, and their ideas about contributions to the forum. The most important question was ‘Does your code of conduct talk about biodiversity conservation?’, as this is a necessary requirement for anybody that wishes to be part of the Forum. The Angling Club was accepted straight away and unanimously, while the veterinarians were rejected. Provincial officials supported the Veterinarians, although the industry was generally not in support. PHASA acknowledged the necessity of having a veterinarian on board to give insights into complex issues such as animal health, but asked the Department of Agriculture to supply one. A translocation representative stated that ‘we always have had problems with vets up until now’ (Interview M.Bronner, 2009), referring to a proposal stating that the darting of animals was to be overseen by a veterinary council. Others feared discussions to become too much focused on scientific principles. A broadly shared opinion was that scientists already contribute to the discussions in other phases of the policy making process. That is, the Department of Environmental Affairs works with scientists who provide them with species-related information and statistics and much debate is shaped by academic information. A South African Hunting representative put it as follows: ‘we should not let scientific reasons president over economic reasons’ (Interview R.Venter, 2011). In the end the application of the veterinarians was not supported by any member because the organization was not representative for all veterinarians in the country. In a later meeting which was initiated by government however, their membership was accepted. The initial hostility to wildlife academics is noticed also by Cousins et al:

Those with scientific credentials want to incorporate more science into ranching, and our respondents felt that the science required translation into a more user-friendly form. Those

interviewees working in the ranching industry without a science background generally felt that they had more practical experience than scientists, and that academic work was irrelevant to them. Integrating science into management will be challenging (Cousins et al., 2008, p. 13).

On the other hand, most industry members I interviewed were in favour of involving certain scientists, particularly those with an agricultural economic background. Industry members I spoke to saw a lacking amount of research on the benefits of game ranching as a burden and have invested in and set up task teams to see to this (field notes HAWASA Meetings 2008-2010).

Inclusion and Exclusion in Contexts of Social Transformation

Since 1994, South Africa has been implementing intensive social transformation schemes to democratize the various levels of political and socio-economic life and to fight the inequities of the Apartheid era. Broadly the transformation of the wildlife industry can be effectuated in two different spheres that are closely related: the transformation of on the ground practices such as social relations, jobs and ownership patterns, and the transformation of political representation. Besides altering economic conditions, Dryzek states that there is a need for the extension and deepening of democracy with ‘the progressive inclusion of various groups and categories of people in political life’ (Dryzek in D. Scott & Oelofse, 2005, p. 445).

Most independent reports on the wildlife sector show however that it has experienced a lack of racial and social transformation or ‘real empowerment’ in both spheres (Cousins et al., 2008; Patterson & Khosa, 2005; The National Agricultural Marketing Council, 2006). This is recognized by activists, by scholars and journalists, which have frequently described game farms as ‘wildlife playgrounds for a privileged elite’ (Kepe, Wynberg, & Ellis, 2002), and by industry itself, which either sees this as an image problem that needs to be changed, or an opportunity to grow. Industry members actively try to change this image problem: ‘we elected a new guy to the board who’s not Afrikaans, he’s German or English I think. This is a good move or else everybody will think we are just a bunch of white Afrikaners’ (RH 2009). More effectively, media events such as hunting galas, philanthropical donations and auctions are held in which high-profile politicians and businessmen are invited along with hunters and game farmers to publicize their bonds.

In the Wildlife Forum, the topic of transformation is not actively discussed.¹¹⁴ Outsider narratives on transformation, labour relations, and tenant rights are not translated into the Forum and organisational actors that represent these narratives are absent. Scott and Oelofse call these absent actors ‘invisible stakeholders’ and conclude that in South Africa they continue to be excluded from environmental policy processes ‘despite policy and legislative reform’ (D. Scott & Oelofse, 2005, p. 462). The transformation of the sector however, is discussed in the Forum. At the very first forum meeting concerns with employment equity, a government-wide program to redress the inequalities of Apartheid by giving previously disadvantaged groups economic opportunities, were raised by government officials. Members of the forum issued their problems with such programs. A representative stated for instance that ‘taxidermists are small family enterprises and do not know how to incorporate Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) in the industry’ (Wildlife Forum minutes 2005). As BEE is mainly aimed at business with more than 50 employees, one of the first discussions of the Wildlife Forum was what the socio-economic program could possibly mean for the small, often family-run, businesses of the wildlife industry. It was decided that a different structure was needed to talk through BEE’s implications for the industry. A separate commission was put together, consisting of industry and government members, and was titled Transformation Task Team (TTT). A separate discursive space was hereby invoked for bilateral interactions between government and industry. According to the minutes however, this commission did not report back to the forum until November 2008. The industry representative said of the internal TTT meeting ‘I’m slightly pissed off, only the chair and I showed up’ (2009, personal communication). The meeting did result in a plan for transformation though, which was pitched by the industry representative:

What we ask this forum is to give us as TTT the mandate to create one charter that DEAT - with the help of a professional service provider - can create as an umbrella for the whole industry: including National Parks, Taxidermies, Ranching, Hunting, and so on (Wildlife Forum notes 2009).

To most participants who attended this forum it was unclear what ‘transformation charter’ meant. When the representative from Environmental Affairs mentioned that there was as of yet

¹¹⁴ Although an independent journalist and visitor to a public meeting of the Forum told me: ‘it is incredible having a black government chairperson here between all these khaki shirts. Twenty years ago he would be shot in public!’

no budget for a service provider or other concrete steps towards transformation policy, a forum member cried out that ‘transformation was already in the minister’s speech!’ This points out how government is not only expected to bring about, but can also claim success by means of, programs on social redistribution. In this case, although the ‘transformation charter’ had already been brought out into the open as a political success, there was little on the table yet. The discussion continued as follows between the forum chair and two task team representatives - one from industry (I) and one from government (G):

- Representative (I): We want the mandate and decision to be made now.
- Forum Chair (G): Can you circulate a document first? If we need to employ a professional we need more information about the plans. Also, if it is for the whole industry we need to vote.
- Representative (G): I think it is fair to say that we do not need to vote on this. Everyone agrees, as we have been going at this issue for some time now.
- Forum Chair (G): [After private consultation with the Representative (G)]. Ok, we give you green light to develop the document and we’ll circulate it so that we can continue our work and get the funding.
- Representative (I): The reality is that we’ll never go back to this decision. I want it to be taken down black on white. There will be one decision for one charter and that is made here. No going back later.

A discourse coalition with potential to change institutions was thus forged. By meeting in a separate discursive space the TTT-members came to a mutual understanding of the social problem – the lack of social transformation in the hunting industry – and created a new dominant narrative on how to solve it. What is noteworthy here is that the TTT members, having worked together on a specific issue, seemed better aligned to each other than that the government representative was his direct colleague, the Forum Chair. I asked the industry representative what happened.

- Representative: I think at the forum, most people had no idea what was happening. But [the government representative] did, he understood the dynamics. Now all the subsets; ecotourism, hunting, farming, taxidermy, including the game reserves, will all be part of this thing: we’ll have a common charter we’ll agree to.
- DS: But I don’t get it – what do they agree to? There was no text.

- Representative: Agreement is the first principle: then I can go away and create the mechanisms and appoint government people to do this. I can't use my own bank resources to do this.
- DS: What kind of mechanisms would they be? You were talking about rural areas; will they be focused on rural upliftment?
- Representative: It could well be this. Or instead of having 2000 government inspectors of abattoirs, training a black person to be a private inspector on the farm. Or let's say the hunter's assistant could be trained to do the inspection when they prepare the carcass for the customer. It's empowering a black youngster to be an inspector. We have training schools and everything.

The transformation task team reported on its progress during the following forum meetings. Although the issue of BEE and Transformation have been ongoing agenda points for five years, at the time of writing, no documents had been written or enforced. What is reported upon from time to time is successful fundraising activities by the industry. The Professional Hunting Association of South Africa (PHASA) has a yearly gala dinner with an auction, of which the donations are set aside for the 'training of black students'. In the Limpopo province game farmers and government officials raised 1.5 million Rands by putting a 5000 ZAR premium on leopard permits. This money was awarded to similar training programmes. One local hunting organisation stated that 'some politicians see us as enemies, but actually through fundraising 500 000 ZAR is set aside for transformation' (Interview N.Willemse, 2010). However, there is lack of consensus about the meaning of 'transformation' or 'Black Economic Empowerment'. In practice it frequently refers to a narrow conception of empowerment, focussing strictly on the training and creation of low-skilled labour. There are very few discussions about changing land or wildlife ownership, or about the changing of management positions in the private wildlife sector. Structural reform thereby seems to remain unaddressed, while symbolic donations are highlighted as contributions to rural development by both the private sector as government partners.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ More recently, the move to Water Affairs seems to have given a new impulse to the link between wildlife and development. An example of this shift is the government led 'Hunting Indaba' of October 2012, a platform meeting in which hunting and civil society partners were invited to speak about hunting issues and 'address transformation challenges in the sector to ensure barriers are removed and opportunities created'.

On Self-Regulation: a Warthog is not an Impala

During several meetings in 2009/2010 the administration of permits for wild animals was discussed. Industry members voiced their frustrations with government as they believed it did not perform its statutory tasks of efficiently and effectively issuing necessary permits. Changing permit institutions is the one issue that was on the mind of all industry members I spoke to (in Pretoria as well as on farms) as government is accused of being slow and inefficient (in most jurisdictions), while the permits are largely understood by hunters and industry to be mere cash-cows for the state. Hopes of the wildlife sector are clear:

We are being more recognised by government for what we are doing and I foresee that within 10 years we will have more self administration and self regulation. Self administration here is the governments' law and how they want it and they will get us to implement it and make sure that our members and everybody cooperates and operates within the law and even if there is permits to be issued, that they'll allow us to issue them with their conditions (Interview A.Pretorius,2010).

Therefore, agenda point 6.5 of the meeting of March 23, 2009 was titled 'Self Regulation'. An industry member introduced the topic by presenting a way for the minister to speed up the process of permitting by means of 'self regulation'. The following dialogue unfolded.

- Chair: We do not understand what this means. You cannot regulate yourself.
- Industry: We are saying, let the industry help by a process of self regulation. We will use our technology and money and will process money to DEAT if fees are involved. Auditors can be taken on board to monitor the process. We want to explore with you and the minister how we can hold your hands to help self-administer. On your premises exactly.
- Industry 2: We are already auditing and administrating warthogs for agriculture (points at agriculture representative). It has been going on for four years and it goes well.
- Policy Officer: We must be cautious about such things: species lists cannot simply be deregulated, there are requirements issued by the various acts.
- Industry: There is nothing unique about what we are saying. We know our colleagues in government have not got the capacity... we do have, and we want to help.
- Policy Officer: But industry cannot issue permits, the delegation of authority to issue permits has been done only to organs of state. Maybe industry can perform some admin, we will have to look into this.

Chair: The proposed change of responsibilities affects provincial government. They have already employed people to work on permits specifically and this proposal may lead to job losses. A legal opinion has to be obtained to change such things and also, concerning permit fees: treasury has to approve. This is a big thing.

I asked the Agricultural department about the ‘self-regulation’ of warthogs who confirmed that a system is in place in which the industry issues permit books that regulate the transportation of warthog products. Copies of the permit go to the landowner, hunter and veterinary services. Warthogs are not classified by law as game and thus need no specific environmental permits however. A question to a policy officer from the department of Agriculture (DoA) about further regulations shows the confusions:

DoA: The warthog is not an impala, it has different legal features.

DS: So it’s only the warthog that is administered by agriculture?

DoA: And buffalo ...and all those kinds of animals but hunters are still not allowed to shoot buffalo without permits...only warthog.

DS: And that discussion will now be taken up to ministerial level?

DoA: The whole thing of self administration was initiated by the minister of environmental affairs, Van Schalkwyk.... But now his own department is against it. Two provinces that were totally against the whole thing saying it would lead to job losses and so on...

DS: Which provinces are these?

DoA: Eastern Cape and North West ...and coincidentally they are the provinces with the worst permit records...in the Northern side and Limpopo it takes you two days to get a permit and we have a lot of support but these two it takes you months to get a permit... all different kinds of excuses.

A conflictive situation came into being that was not resolved until the next meeting. One of the main reasons for conflict was then understood to be the ‘framing’ of the discussion. Government made it very clear that ‘self-regulation’ is not desirable or attainable, after which the forum negotiated the more acceptable concept of ‘self-administration’. A task team was then formed to assess the possibilities of such self-administration. Although a government member initially chaired this, the topic detonated communications between government and the industry in a later stage. A high-placed officer outside of the forum disliked the idea of self-administration and forced the task team to be abolished. There was particular antipathy that the document which was created by the task team had the DEA logo on it, and the external official

further advised the DEA not to chair the meetings: 'the Terms of Reference must be revised to change the chairmanship to be non-governmental'. The forum meeting came to a complete halt because of these announcements and all non-governmental actors walked out.

After the break-up happened, forum members told me they felt that they were not taken seriously. They told me that a lot of their work and time was in vain and doubted the future of the platform. In this case, participants feared that the space they occupied was more symbolic than discursive. Edelman wrote about this some time ago and argues that much of government action is performed to provide symbolic reassurance, 'in particular to convey an impression that policy makers are taking seriously the concerns of specific interest groups' (Edelman, 1988). Government members were also concerned, but they seemed particularly concerned in a pragmatic way as they saw it as their task to organize the forum in an orderly manner. This illustrates that participants may have different conceptions of what FCEs are and why they are. Whereas all non-governmental members see the Wildlife Forum as a discursive space to forward their position and cause institutional change, government member's goals are not institutional change necessarily. They may see it as their duty as a department to facilitate civilians in their discussions, or even as duties they perform to 'do their job'.

The forum break-up must be seen in light of external influences to the forum's place in government as well. In April 2009, Jacob Zuma was elected as the new President of the Republic and he reshuffled the cabinet and DEAT considerably. The department was dissected into two parts consisting of a new stand-alone Tourism department and an Environmental Affairs department which was placed with a different minister, philosophy and priority under the auspices of Water Affairs. With a new minister and new chairperson of the forum, the contacts that were established between government and industry were fragile and had to be re-established. A hunting director stated to me 'I think what happens is if you have a new president and your cabinet changes, the whole culture and energy of a department will change anyway and the unfortunate part is that things will happen like the forum chair who has been moved to another department. Now we have a new chairman at the wildlife forum who doesn't have the history (Interview S.Witten, 2009). External political influence hereby led to a new organisational field with either new or repositioned government players and narratives, some of which were critical of the Wildlife Forum. The reshuffling of power could be noticed in little things such as a concise email on the location of the forum. The meeting before the elections, in March 2009, ended with the announcement that the following meeting would be held on one of the industry member's game farms. After the reshuffling of the cabinet an email was

distributed to all Forum members stating that this was ‘unacceptable’; government forums were to be held on government premises, in Pretoria.

Conservation through Development: a Discourse Alliance

One of the very first discussions in the Wildlife Forum focused on the symbiosis between consumptive and non-consumptive wildlife management (Wildlife Forum minutes 2005). It was meant to create a strong communal link between all platform members whether they were in favour of public parks, ecotourism, hunting, or meat production. The forum thereby embraced different conservation and production narratives and knotted the representative organisations together to promote a type of ‘green capitalism’. Officials of Environmental Affairs who were critical of commercial approaches to wildlife over time accepted that wildlife producers could contribute to conservation as a premise for negotiation. They follow Minister Van Schalkwyk of Environmental Affairs (now Minister for Tourism) who avowed that ‘game farming and hunting contribute significantly to conservation, tourism development, job creation and sustainable development in rural areas’ (November 2007). Wildlife professionals were offered official conservation titles (such as nature reserve instead of game farm) and shifted to a discursive position that accepts the necessity of regulation. During the forum and in private statements, industry representatives deplored private sector members who do not practice conservation and produce ‘freak animals’, offer caged hunting or run intensive breeding programs. Most industry spokesmen, who originally adhered to a strict production narrative, have now incorporated conservation issues in their rationale, even if these are placed clearly behind profit-motivations. When pressed on conservation matters narrators are quick and proud to indicate that landowners saved certain species from extinction. ‘This happened to the quagga’, one farmer told me, ‘it went extinct, but for the foresight of a few brave farmers, the Bontebok and the Black Wildebeest would also have been extinct’ (Interview D.Marais, 2011). Duncan Marais stressed that these animals are not saved by conservationist or state regulations, but by means of entrepreneurial behaviour, ‘because the love of a landowner for his *plaas* [farmland] and his animals’(ibid.). This also is purported as the answer to contemporary conservation problems:

If you allow people from overseas to hunt cheetah, the farm owners will protect cheetah because they can make money out of it. If you cannot trade it, why must you look after an animal? We have been telling governments for how long now, let us get value out of cheetah and then we

will protect it, but sometimes it is difficult to get people to understand this if they don't live in nature and stay in offices all day (Interview J.Viljoen, 2009).

Hereby we see that the new narrative has a win-win glow to it, which predicts and assures that conservation and economic development go hand in hand. Moneymaking and conservation thus become interdependent. The rationale is that government can succeed in their goals to conserve land and species, if and only if rules are made to facilitate wildlife private property markets. National stewardship programs have therefore been launched in which game farmers are offered subsidies and fiscal incentives that range from tax deduction for the removal of alien species, to having the value of the land deducted from one's taxable income (Snijders 2012, p. 8). Voices that originally spoke 'production' have thus reconfigured their narratives to stress their ideas about conservation, while conservationists have taken in economic arguments to come to this new narrative of 'green capitalism'.

Unstable Dynamics

Discourse coalitions are not fusions in which goals and organisations are thoroughly aligned: they leave room for manoeuvre, interpretation and private goals. Because of this the 'green capital' coalition is fundamentally unstable and is renegotiated constantly as events unfold. In the Wildlife Forum this is played out particularly by industry members who have committed to conservation and development, but pressurize government by warning that they can defect to the Department of Agriculture (and effectively a strict production narrative) at any time. A discussion from the forum illustrates this:

- WRSA: We are concerned about increasing legal obligations. All these new regulations in the 9+1 system come with a huge administrative burden and delays for the industry, while tax incentives and drought relief are non-existent. Why should we stay with Environmental Affairs?
- Chair: You do not fall strictly under Environmental Affairs, you fall under all South African law, whether it is justice, land reform, labour or environment.
- Province: The industry should be cautious for hasty decisions. They do not know what they have here.
- Industry: In any case, we believe the Forum needs more extensive representation of Agriculture.

The last did not happen, but the dialogue does show how power relations continue to be performed in discourse coalitions. The funding of programs that fall under coalition agreements, in this case conservation on private land, is hereby of continuous discussion. Farmers and hunters complain that they cannot help government with its goal of expanding conservation with private money only. 'We think tax concessions will result in compliance; there is a greater need for incentives for the wildlife industry' one spokesperson said (Interview S.Witten, 2009). In later sessions it became clear that the Chair as well as the Minister (through a letter to the Forum) encouraged incentivizing game farmers, and this endorsement further encouraged DEAT to consult and explore available options. Although these incentives would have to be organized with the province, a national workshop between game farmers and government members was held to debate the issue.

Despite its instability and tensions, the alliance is rewarding to the involved partners and has effect on the organisational field by propelling those organisational actors who retain strict original narratives to discursive fringes. Animal rights-, land and labour activists as well as intensive production advocates are not welcomed by dominant green capital actors and are actively excluded.

In general, in the forum and beyond, strong hostility exists between members of conservation NGOs and industry or hunting organizations, who frequently refer to the former as 'greenies', 'bunny huggers', and 'environmental terrorists'. At industry meetings direct strategies to limit 'greenies' access to the institutional field are discussed along with tactics to weaken their legitimacy. When an NGO that aims to protect leopards and publicly castigates landowners for killing them, was discussed at one industry meeting, a representative stated:

From an intelligence point of view this is a business opposition, we need to break them down. The question for us is: how do we face the normal guy on the street? Disney has glorified the leopard. The jackal and hyena always stay ugly and dumb, but not the leopard. We as an industry need to protect the leopard ourselves to take away [the NGO's] credits (Field notes, 2009).

Animal welfare and rights organizations use similar abrasive wordings to describe wildlife industry members and hunters. Collaborations between government and industry are condemned especially and both are accused of institutionalizing animal abuse to make millions of dollars.

Wildlife and environment conservation must not be abandoned to an animal-unfriendly system that uses profit to justify the killing of healthy, defenceless animals. By allowing hunters to make the claim that they ‘pay for conservation’, human society is failing in its responsibility to wildlife. The fate of wild animals has literally been abandoned into the hands of killers (ARA website, visited in July 2009).

To counter the influence of the dominant green capitalism narrative and their co-authored texts various environmental organizations have produced their own texts and probed media, fundraising and alternative legal routes to institutionalise these texts. In August 2009 for instance, a number of NGOs held a meeting to initiate a new ‘people-driven’ South African law on conservation issues. The intention was to gain broad support from citizens so that the proposal could be directed to parliament immediately and could thereby avoid departmental procedures and politics (such as the Wildlife Forum). Although not much came of this, the hunting coalition strongly condemned these activities in the forum. Government members in the Wildlife Forum generally welcome environmental organizations for their ‘watchdog function’, but said to have difficulties with their approach which was labelled as ‘negative’ or ‘aggressive’. ‘We would organize something’, one official said, ‘and they would come in, shout, and then leave the meeting’ (Interview J.Pitho, 2009). Other complaints about local environmental NGO’s were the public rebuking of officials in media reports, the sharp and aggressive tone, and the ‘hundreds of questions’ which costed substantial government capacity.

The lack of coalitions between environmental NGOs and Forum members is somewhat remarkable because coalitions between industry members, government and green NGOs do exist on the ground. The animal-welfare organisation NSPCA for instance is institutionalised and funded by government and co-operates closely with the administration of the Animal Welfare Act. Also, there are a number of conservation alliances between ecotourism-operators and animal rights organizations. Shamwari game reserve in the Eastern Cape for instance works with the high-profile Born Free Foundation whose official goal is fighting ‘the ivory trade and ‘sport’ hunting, opposing killing wild animals for ‘bushmeat’, or challenging the exploitation of wild animals in zoos and circuses’ (www.bornefree.org.uk, September 2011). Also, one could expect amateur hunters and animal welfare organizations to team up as these organizations share a general critique on wildlife commodification and a passion and reverence for (the protection of) nature. However, these coalitions do not materialize in the National political force field, where ‘hunters’ and ‘activists’ stand at opposite sides of the spectrum. In the Wildlife Forum this may have to do with the strong focus on hunting. Ecotourism does not

take a very active role in the Wildlife Forum (although they are generally members of unions like WRSA, that attend the Forum). To advance their position against critics - particularly against 'alternative land-use' narrators – this subsector chooses different routes for legitimization. The ecotourism industry in the Eastern Cape for instance substantially sponsors independent researchers to write reports on the impacts of ecotourism farms (e.g. reports funded by the Wilderness Foundation 2006; 2008; 2011), and engages with government on a provincial level.

In the Wildlife Forum a 'green' narrative which criticizes wildlife utilization is physically unrepresented, but it is recurrently translated into the arena as the Forum's strongest counter-narrative. After many cases of perceived negative publicity, the Forum decided to institutionalize the counter-narrative by creating a Communication Task Team (CTT), which was to create texts about wildlife issues and distribute them to media (19 April 2006). This CTT is a prime example that shows how organizations engage in new relational activities by firstly forging a close collaboration and consequently producing texts that bear only one author: the collective voice. Wildlife ranchers, (Professional) hunters and DEAT took place in this Task Team, with the following instructions (Wildlife Forum minutes, august 2006):

- Investigate opportunities to approach the media and get a voice for the wildlife industry
- Be proactive, not only reactive
- Create positive information distribution opportunities
- Investigate opportunities for awareness raising
- Develop a media list and identify target groups and organisations

The wish to include an additional official from Agriculture who would be 'responsible for the implementation of the animal welfare act' was expressed also, although it is unclear if this ever happened. Throughout its existence government remained reserved about its role in the CTT and stated that messages from the Forum with any implications for their department needed to be approved by the Director of Communications before they could be publicly released (12/06/08). Specific and recurring requests were soon tabled to the commission and the Department 1) to publicly highlight agricultural and conservation benefits wildlife utilization provided, and 2) to strongly condemn anti-industry narratives.

When the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) distributed posters at airports that aimed to discourage visitors from buying curios made out of wildlife products, the forum agreed that this could have negative consequences on their industry and summoned the CTT to

counteract 'since the advert by IFAW infringes the constitutional right of the wildlife industries'. When an activist wrote an 'anti-industry article and distributed it widely' the CTT was asked again to counteract. However, when the commission reported back to the forum on its activities its Chairperson said media releases were not signed by government. He publicly questioned if the commission and even the forum meetings were necessary 'if nothing will come out of them' (13/3/08). When pressed on the anti-industry article DEAT recommitted itself to the CTT but said the Minister would not respond to such an article because government supports freedom of speech, transparency and democracy.

Abridgement

To uncover how the policy principles of neoliberal nature, such as privatization, commodification, deregulation, and reregulation, come about, it is important to find out what organizations and institutions currently operate within the field of wildlife politics and how they advance their positions in relation to each other. I therefore studied the Wildlife Forum in Pretoria as well as provincial and national stakeholder meetings on wildlife governance. In analyzing the Wildlife Forum, I distinguish between three parties, namely government, industry and civil society organisations. Because there is a lack of absolute power by one party to institutionalize narratives in the Wildlife Forum, coalitions are built and broken as events unfold. Such (organisational or discourse) coalitions are observed when actors change or align their narratives, organisations or goals. This process of embracing other organisations is similar to what DiMaggio & Powell called isomorphic changes. They are mimetic processes in which organizations facing uncertainty alter or adopt behaviour that is similar to the behaviour of other organizations within their field (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). In the wildlife field I found that organizations mimic the narratives of those whom they perceive to have legitimacy (Stainback, Tomaskovic-Devey, & Skaggs, 2010). This behaviour is seen particularly when there is uncertainty in the organisational field. In the emerging and transforming wildlife field for instance, it is striking how most stakeholders have taken story lines on 'conservation' into their narratives, paired with phrases such as sustainability, biodiversity, and also rural development. The most dominant actor in the process of institutional change, the State, promotes these values in her texts, and moreover, builds organizational borders with these narratives by engaging with those, and only those, actors who adhere to these values. For instance, government states that only organizations who have 'sustainable biodiversity

conservation' in their constitution may participate and engage in the Forum. No claims are made about the definition of sustainable conservation or about the active implementation of it, but the isomorphic calibration of narratives is required. Those actors in the organizational field who do not agree with, for instance, seeing wildlife as resources or as biodiversity, are thereby excluded. Those who are primarily concerned with the effects of wildlife policy (such as the changing of land ownership or labour relations), but do not necessarily actively promote conservation ideals, are equally uninvited.

Just as runners in a race compete with the times of runners who are not in their race (by referring to world records for instance), Wildlife Forum narratives compete against other narratives that are physically unrepresented in the Forum. In my research I found that civil society actors such as animal welfare organizations were largely unrepresented in government stakeholder platforms, although they do manage to cause a stir and invoke institutional change by communicating directly with government, by publicizing their statements in the media and by actively campaigning. Some actors who are not present in the Wildlife Forum thus seek to legitimize their ideas in different ways. Game farm workers are equally unrepresented in official forums such as the Wildlife Forum. Their narrative however is also not strongly represented through different communication platforms or venues.

When asked why these actors were absent, the common reason that was given for this was that they are not part of the industry and that labour discussions should take place elsewhere. Through the Transformation Task Team and Black Economic Empowerment Task Team, the Wildlife Forum, does however speak directly of labour issues and makes decisions that can affect the development of livelihoods in a positive or negative way. In 2005, three panels were created to advise Minister van Schalkwyk on wildlife hunting and ranching. The panel recommendations included the advice to include "workers" and "labour representatives" as stakeholders. Ten years down the line, this recommendation seems neglected.

By studying the social dynamics in the Wildlife Forum, I attempted to show how FCEs can configure standards in a broader organizational field, how participants interact with 'outsiders', and how in this process inclusion and exclusion are constantly negotiated. In the Forum certain stakeholders such as labour organisations and environmental activists were actively barred from participation while, (see MacDonald's findings on the CBD convention for similar results) I showed how national government shaped 'a political dynamic in which capitalist interests seek to secure continued access to resources by using multiple channels of influence to shape policy' (MacDonald, 2010b, p. 531).

What can be said generally about the membership to this FCE is that the initial group of participants remain a strong established group of insiders and the forum remains difficult to access for outsiders. It upholds strong borders particularly towards external actors that fall outside the sphere of government, industry and hunting organisations. As the Forum's 'institutional logic' is produced in a utilitarian manner by the field participants, it favours those who are involved and holds back those who are not. The definition of the Wildlife Forum and its make-up have thereby been translated from being broadly inclusive in founding documents to an 'industry forum' in its actual composition. Its boundaries are defined rigidly on the basis of strict requirements, although these definitions seem weak inside the forum. Topics that go beyond the strictly defined jurisdiction of wildlife or conservation policy, such as racial transformation, labour issues but also animal welfare, may be reasons for outsiders to be kept out, while being considered for discussion internally.

An interesting discourse coalition is the outcome. By means of organisational and discursive restructuring government and industry actors now promote a narrative that endorses both government's conservation industry and industry's development interests. Business has thereby been endowed with a privileged position through which environmental policy can be co-constructed and co-implemented (MacDonald, 2010b, p. 531).



It is an ugly thing, even when best managed: it is an assembly of unfortunate beings, pampered and bloated above their natural size, stewed and heated into diseased growth; corrupted by evil communication into speckled and inharmonious colors; torn from the soil which they loved, and of which they were the spirit and the glory, to glare away their term of tormented life among the mixed and incongruous essences of each other, in earth that they know not, and in air that is poison to them.

John Ruskin, 1903

Chapter VIII Closing

The answer to the main research question on how wildlife is officially classified in South Africa lies in the process of boundary making. Within this work I have dissected boundary making into three particular types of boundaries, namely material boundaries, policy boundaries and imagined boundaries. I noted that the three boundaries are closely related and sometimes overlapping. Stemming from a social constructivist angle, I depart from the idea that boundaries, however natural they may seem, are imagined boundaries and are socially constructed. These imagined boundaries in nature, may lead to official boundaries by means of politico-legal agreements that are backed by state power. Official boundaries come in the form of wildlife classifications, which have underlying frameworks of incentives that may prescribe material boundaries such as fences, walls, signs or armed patrols. Vice versa; material boundaries may inspire new thinking about policy boundaries and can thereby both influence and shape them. In the case of wildlife in South Africa, I argue, a significant shift has taken place over the last few decades in this boundary trinity. The thinking about wildlife has been shifting, the policy categories have been shifting, material boundaries have been shifting, and all this has resulted in vast consequences to the way humans interact with each other, with animals, and with South Africa's land. To scrutinize these alterations I delved deeper into four research threads:

- How did South Africa's distinctive rules and regulations regarding wildlife ownership historically and politically develop and what consequences did shifting power relations during South Africa's 1994 transition to democracy have on these rules and regulations?
- What is the scale of South Africa's land-based conversions to wildlife utilization and what are the driving forces behind them?
- What organizations and institutions currently operate within the field of wildlife politics and how do they advance their positions in relation to each other?
- What perspectives do various wildlife producers, representatives and policymakers have on the sector's relation to rural development?

I will summarize the answers to these questions one by one below. The last question will not be dealt with separately however: the question of wildlife and development relates directly to the first three questions and will be integrated in each paragraph. Methodologically, the three

blocks broadly correspond to the three sets of data I collected: from archives (historical tendencies), from game farmers in the Cacadu region (driving forces) and from wildlife governance representatives (wildlife politics). I will start out with a paragraph that presents the context in which the wildlife sector and these research questions emerged.

Wildlife Ranching in South Africa

Owing to its fugitive mobility, its intractability to domestication and its complex ideological associations with nature, wildlife has globally and historically resisted enclosure (Robbins & Luginbuhl, 2005, p. 25). In most countries today, private possession and commercialization of wildlife is therefore prohibited by law (Muir-Leresche & Nelson, 2000). Undomesticated animals are still considered *res nullius* and are accordingly regulated and managed strictly by the State. In Southern Africa however, a number of initial economic successes with wildlife on privately owned property triggered an exceptional shift in wildlife policy design (Carruthers, 2008; Dasmann & Mossman, 1961; Wels, 2003, pp. 18–32). Where the prevailing aphorism used to be that ‘one cannot ranch in a zoo’, South Africa fundamentally changed its perspectives on wildlife management and ownership (Child, 1988; Muir-Leresche & Nelson, 2000, p. 7). Backed by state empowered institutions, landowners gained the option to acquire full control over wild animals on their land. Covering approximately one sixth of South Africa’s land, some 9500 private wildlife producers (of which a substantial sum are international business men) are engaged in various modes of wildlife-based production; i.e. ecotourism, hunting, venison production and livestock trade (Du Toit, 2007; Bothma, 2009). According to a study by Flack (2002), 5000 km² of South African land was fenced off with 2.40 meters high boundaries during the nineties, leading to a total enclosed wildlife area of at least 205 000 km² in 2006 (NAMC 2006, iv; Du Toit 2007). Little quantitative research has been done on this subject since. Smith and Wilson illustrated that most agricultural farmers diversified their business by running traditional stock-farming activities in tandem with wildlife-based ventures in the nineties (Smith & Wilson, 2002, p. 1). Studies in the Eastern Cape Province substantiate this assertion and show that ninety percent of farms are now mixed farms, while nearly seven percent of landowners in this province have removed and replaced all domestic stock by wildlife (Interview Prof. Van Niekerk, 2008). In a personal interview, an executive-manager of WRSA stated that ‘there’s no free roaming game in South Africa anymore; there may be some springbok or impala, but at least ninety-five percent of game is owned by people’ (Interview A. Pretorius, 2008).

These wildlife-related physical enclosures of land occur amid larger political economic transitions in the field of agriculture (Robbins & Luginbuhl, 2005, p. 25). With the emergence of large scale, feedlot-centred production systems and decreasing agricultural subsidies after the demise of Apartheid agricultural policy, producer margins have declined and have put traditional farming properties in peril (Love & Burton, 1999). I argue in this thesis that these challenges, combined with new societal goals such as increased conservation and the redistribution of land and labour have led to the ‘biodiversification’ of farm properties. Hereby landowners diversified their businesses to include new bio-entities and reconfigured existing bio-entities for production purposes, game farming is the prime example. Wildlife production has ‘been predicated on the need to reduce farm labour, the prevalence of farm murders and security issues generally as well as the threat of land restitution claims and expropriation’ (Carruthers, 2008, p. 161). In this context, South Africa is experiencing an on-going shift in land use from conventional farming to so-called amenity ownership – ‘where land in current production is purchased by [...] buyers who are interested in non-developed landscapes and good views’ (Robbins&Luginbuhl 2005:27). This transition is especially prominent around national parks and other ‘wildernesses’(Travis et al., 2002) and is claimed to result in rising land prices and (forced) migration of rural residents and communities (Del Grande, 2006; Luck, 2005; Naidoo, 2006; Wegerif et al., 2005).

Neumann famously stated that a conflictual relationship has come to exist between rural African population and predominantly white wildlife managers in his book ‘Imposing Wilderness’ (Neumann, 1998, p. 4). In South Africa this seems to be consistent as the wildlife industry’s great geographic expansion and European ideals of pristine wilderness take place in a country that has a large rural and agrarian population that compete for the same land and natural resources. Commercial exploitation of wildlife is thereby often criticized to be an exclusive and excluding ‘white-owned’ form of property management (Kepe et al., 2002; Slater, 2002; Spierenburg & Wels, 2006; Wolmer, 2007). Privately protected areas are in the media regularly portrayed as ‘wildlife playgrounds for a privileged elite’(Kepe et al., 2002). Since South Africa is challenged with a frail process of land reform¹¹⁶ - aimed at redressing its history of white-ruled resource dispossession under apartheid¹¹⁷ the expanding industry is highly contested. Since wildlife ownership does not come about without land rights and plot

¹¹⁶ See Ntsebeza and Hall 2007 for an overview of this process.

¹¹⁷ For example, the notorious Land Act of 1913 resulted in ‘whites’ appropriating 87 per cent of South Africa’s land for their exclusive use.

sizes are typically much larger than in traditional agriculture, the questions ‘who owns land?’ and ‘who should own land?’ are particularly sore in this sector.

Regarding the magnitude of the industry’s growth and the contestation over land-use in the popular press and in NGO reports (e.g. R. Carroll, 2004; Del Grande, 2006; e.g. Naidoo, 2006) it is remarkable that very few studies have been conducted on wildlife politics and its relationship to rural development. The studies that have been conducted on wildlife ranching in South Africa are generally based on self-administered surveys with limited respondents (See Langholz & Kerley, 2006; Sims-Castley, Kerley, Geach, & Langholz, 2005; Smith & Wilson, 2002). Moreover, they present starkly contrasting results to the aforementioned public reports. Two popular economic studies for instance present wildlife production as a win-win strategy that fosters both ‘pro-poor’ development and nature conservation (i.e. Langholz & Kerley 2006; Sims-Castley et al. 2005). It is noteworthy that analogous narratives are produced in reports by the Department of Agriculture and the National Agricultural Marketing Council (Department of Agriculture, 2006; The National Agricultural Marketing Council, 2006). Langholz and Kerley find that private wildlife reserves diversify the rural economy, multiply land prices and increase labour opportunities and wages (2006). However, their survey does not differentiate between salaries of managers and operational staff, making it difficult to establish whose wages increase, and who exactly benefits from wildlife utilization. As wildlife farms are generally much larger than traditional farms, conversions frequently go paired with farm consolidations; Langholz and Kerley note an average of 8.2 conventional farm mergers per wildlife reserve (2006, p. 4). It is unclear in their study if the dismissal of former merged farm employees is taken into account in labour statistics. Maybe a wildlife reserve has in an absolute sense more employees than a stock farm but if it has absorbed eight stock farms it may have relatively less employment per hectare. A study by Smith and Wilson seems to suggest this and shows that landowners ‘regard game farming as an alternative to stock farming, as it is considered to be potentially less labour intensive than traditional stock farming’ (2002). This implies a potential negative impact on the labour market and a potential dismissal of active employees. Adding to these negative impacts, Kelly Luck reports that commercialized wildlife farms are ‘both a cause and symptom of a general trend in South Africa towards farm worker retrenchments and eviction’ (2005, p.86). Various NGOs concur and report a range of negative livelihood impacts as a result of wildlife-based conversions, including increased vulnerability, loss of wildlife resources and large-scale evictions (cf reports of NGO’s such as AFRA and ECARP in Naidoo, 2006; Del Grande, 2006; Andrew et al., 2013; Brandt & Spierenburg, 2014; Brooks, Spierenburg, Van Brakel, Kolk, & Lukhozi, 2011).

Historical Tendencies

I argue that South Africa is particularly path-dependent in its attitude towards land and wildlife and so I found it necessary to dig up South Africa's 'archaeological residue' by looking at debates, rules and regulations concerning human-wildlife relations in Apartheid and colonial times. In doing so, we are presented with a diffuse and complex set of intersections involving scales of class, race, gender, nature and technology. This work shows that there is a long tradition of wildlife politics in South Africa, in which powerful actors have continuously attempted to gain control over these natural resources by restricting access to others. An important way to do this was by linking the economic institutionalization of wildlife to the creation of various 'fluid' policy categories. From the moment the VOC arrived in the Cape, wildlife became the subject of classification and relentless reclassification; carnivorous species became vermin and were to be shot, while species that were popular to the well-heeled were to be protected. When policy was not effective in preventing persons from utilizing wildlife, officials created economic machinery to advance their goals by means of taxes, hunting licences, bounties and transportation tariffs. South Africa's rural population and especially the economic elite have never stopped reacting to these measures by opposing them, disregarding them, creating workarounds and brokering deals.

An important alliance this work highlights is the historical alliance between landowners and (conservation) officials. The 1886 game laws, which aimed to protect wildlife and land by limiting the interaction between citizens and wildlife, provide us with an historical example. Landowners who favored this set of laws received liberties in return such as the right to hunt any animal on their land without permits, the right to cultivate, sell and donate animals on their land without licences, and the extension of hunting rights throughout the year. Officials thereby booked significant success in establishing public parks as well as gaining support for new hunting regulations. In the following century, similar but more racialized accords were struck between conservation officials and landowners. Africans were increasingly restricted from hunting, trading, and owning wildlife. Explicitly racist policy was enforced, although restrictions were mostly implemented by proxy; by either prohibiting the use of common hunting methods, fire-arms, access to land, or by requiring certain education of particular family ties. At the same time, from the 1950s onwards white farmers were openly credited as important conservationists in policy meetings. To honour this, a system was devised in which landowners were exempted from most permits, could disregard hunting seasons, and were

allowed to market, sell or donate animal commodities at will. To apply for these exemptions one needed to fence one's land with elevated 'game-fencing'.

Ultimately, the Game Theft Act of 1991 gave all landowners with such game-fencing full property rights over wildlife on their land. Arguably this was one of the largest and most unnoticed transfers of common goods to private landowners in the country's history. It awarded game farmers with considerable wealth overnight and more importantly, made it possible for wildlife assets to be absorbed into the financial market, to lower their financial risk, and to acknowledged them as legally tradable goods. Such legislation strengthened the farmer's inherent command over land, and simultaneously weakened the position of those who did not own land – particularly the large rural black population. Most wildlife was no longer *res nullius*, for all to enjoy, but belonged to a small group of landowners.

SA's political transition of 1994 was in many ways a breaking point with the past. A new government faced the paramount task of addressing poverty, dispossession and inequality, as well as food security and an increasing (international) call for biodiversity conservation. Landowners were forced to diversify and reposition themselves in society due to the deregulation of the market and decline of marketing boards and subsidies. As borders opened, the country was flooded with international markets, rules, tourists, foreign investment and ideas on nature. Whereas there have been gargantuan changes to the nation, it is remarkable to see that the described trends of commoditization and cooperation between landowners and conservation officials remain strong. Environmental institutions that were created during the Apartheid era were not abandoned, developed or amended. On the contrary, the trend to privatize wildlife and to secure land by means of physical boundaries continued through environmental legislation. A good example of this is the described stewardship programs (Chapter IV), which intensify the control over wild property by devolving state tasks and thereby repositioning landowners as officially endorsed conservationists. The state's lack of funding for conservation plays an important role in this policy of deregulation. One sees that private conservation is consistently framed as 'a cost-effective mechanism for government to carry out its conservation mandate and achieve biodiversity and protected area targets'(SANBI/DEAT, 2008b). Once conservation laws are accepted by landowners, economic incentives - such as tax deduction for the removal of alien species or even the deduction of the value of the land from one's taxable income - apply. Those with large swaths of land can thereby benefit from government subsidies while gaining a tighter control over their property. The new set of environmental policies thereby continue to prescribe a highly secured

form of fortress conservation that intrinsically contain a wilderness vision in which humans (and human artefacts) are unwelcome.

By examining specific wildlife institutions that shaped human-nature relations, I aimed to show how a rationale of economic liberalism (Tisdell, 2004) increasingly moved into the domain of human-wildlife relations in South Africa. Whereas the examined institutions were implemented to regulate wildlife theft and to expand public conservation, they had underlying economic principles that resulted in a process of individuation: they enforced material and legal boundaries on nature to facilitate the privatization and commodification of wild animals. The currently upheld Game Theft Act of 1991 is the pinnacle framework in this regard as it creates a legal framework in which natural entities that were beforehand classified as common goods could now be opted for private property. Fencing always provided the key mechanism to reinforce entitlement over wild animals, while simultaneously establishing physical control over private land.

Driving Forces behind Wildlife Conversions

By questioning game farmers about their motivations to choose for wildlife production and ‘biodiversification’ I delved into four dimensions, namely financial motivations, land-reform related motivations, safety and security reasons, and labour reform policy. What is clear is that the environmental policy framework and specifically its accompanying property regulations lead to an immense increase of individual wealth in the years after the Game Theft Act was adopted. The property framework added value to land as wildlife-based land is sold for far higher prices than agricultural land (Chapter IV). Besides this it led to the sky-rocketing of wildlife prices. For instance, whereas a record price of 7000 Rands was paid for a sable antelope in 1987, a buyer put down 12,2 Million Rands for such a creature in 2012 (Louw-Carstens, 2012). Whereas the average price of buffaloes was not more than 5000 Rands in 1995, a buffalo and her calf fetched 20 Million Rands in 2012. In Chapter V I showed that the steady influx in wildlife prices is a broad trend. South Africa has now got a breeding industry worth billions of Rands as well as the continent’s largest hunting industry. Bringing environmental policy into the equation once more, there is no country where so many species can be hunted commercially as in South Africa. Through advanced breeding practices ‘new’ species (such as golden gnus or chocolate impalas) appear each year.

Despite the enormous amount of (inter)national capital that flows through the wildlife industry, I found that landowners do not sell or convert their land ‘simply for the money’. Some

respondents stated their wildlife reserves made a large and continuous loss. Reasons to keep these lands were for lifestyle-reasons (enjoying nature and tranquillity) or for reasons of land speculation. Besides financial motivations however narratives on rural security are on the tip of many game farmers' tongues. The heavy security boundaries that game farms provide, I argue, are seen to add security benefits for protecting one's expensive wildlife but also for oneself. The institutional blueprint of wildlife reserves securitizes the land against malevolent animals as well as humans. Predators and poachers, two renowned adversaries of farmers, are hereby barred from access. The game farms setup allow one to have vast plains, large and dangerous animals, heightened electric fences, double-fenced housing, 24/7 manned security, barbed wire, live wire, offsets, fenced river access, armed patrol guards, roads with security checks and boom barriers, as well as significant amounts of firearms which are all legally held for conservation purposes.

What ties into this security narrative is a general distrust in the South African state that I observed amongst many of the landowners I interviewed. Large central policies to redistribute wealth and property seem particularly unpopular. Land reform is one of these reform policies and adds an important dimension to the land conversions. By providing case studies I argue that land reform programs lead to game farmers both opting out of the land market as well as being a catalyser for some landowners to convert to game farming. I also make a case for studying public-private conservation partnerships such as stewardship programs in the context of land reform as they determine how a significant slice of South Africa ought to be utilized. Conservation mandates, determined by national legislation and informed by international conventions such as the CBD, prescribes that 12% of South Africa's land ought to be 'protected' by 2015. As only half this percentage was considered protected area in 2011, many millions of hectares of land are to be amalgamated in the coming years.¹¹⁸ Three ways that government outlines to reach these targets are by means of a) acquisition of private land, b) declaration of state land as protected areas, and c) by means of contract agreements with private landowners. As the state sees only limited applicability in the first two options due to fiscal constraints, public-private partnerships have actively been pursued. Now that wildlife production covers almost three times the amount of land that government has set for conservation purposes, the reclassification of private wildlife land to conservation land is attractive for government's goal to realize its protected area targets. After a successful pilot

¹¹⁸ South Africa has now accepted that 12% is too high a target and unsuccessfully aimed to protect an additional 2.2% (2.7m ha) by 2014, which is in line with additional international conventions, namely Goal 7 of the Millennium Development Goals.

project in the Western Cape¹¹⁹ a stewardship program has been adopted at a national level. Through this program landowners are recognized as conservation custodians of their land. Particularly game farmers who sell and produce nature and do not have stock overgrazing the land find their way to these programs. The stewardship program helps towards gaining South Africa's conservation goals, and can also be called a catalyser for game farm conversions as it incentivizes game farming and its model of large-scale landownership in many ways.

Finally, the current labour reform, which occurs within an economic framework that pushes for privatization, deregulation and persistent growth, contributes to land-use such as game farming. WBLU can be seen as the arrangement that strikes a chord between two clashing policy sets. That is, landowners are inclined to have business models that are less dependent on human low-skilled labour as they are compelled to make their businesses grow both physically as financially while operating in an increasingly technical and international market. Simultaneously the government is pushing for social reform and an expanding welfare state through measures as an increased minimum wage, improved social security and tenure rights for those who dwell on land for a certain amount of time. WBLU provides an option for landowners to both employ less people because the labour is less intensive, as have less people residing on their land because farm dwellers and their properties do not fit the imagined blueprint of a private nature reserve. As a large amount of land is necessary to run a profitable game reserve, these type of landowners tend to amalgamate adjacent land to increase their size, thereby leading to a decrease in the absolute number of farms. Because wildlife-based land has higher prices than common farmland and these prices are on the rise, it has become attractive to convert land to WBLU and also to speculate with such land. This land-trend happens within a larger agricultural context but has contributed to the shedding of about one million workers in the agricultural sector over the past forty years. Sandrey et al. have shown that employment on farms fell by 50% or 800 000 workers from 1968 to 2008 (See figure 8.1). And although much of the decline took place before 1994 'since 2003 almost 200,000 additional employment opportunities have been lost in primary agriculture' (Sandrey, Punt, Jensen, & Vink, 2011).

¹¹⁹ Successes thus far in the Western Cape include: 40 Contract Nature Reserves, 12 Biodiversity Agreements and 19 Conservation Areas through the Stewardship Programme.

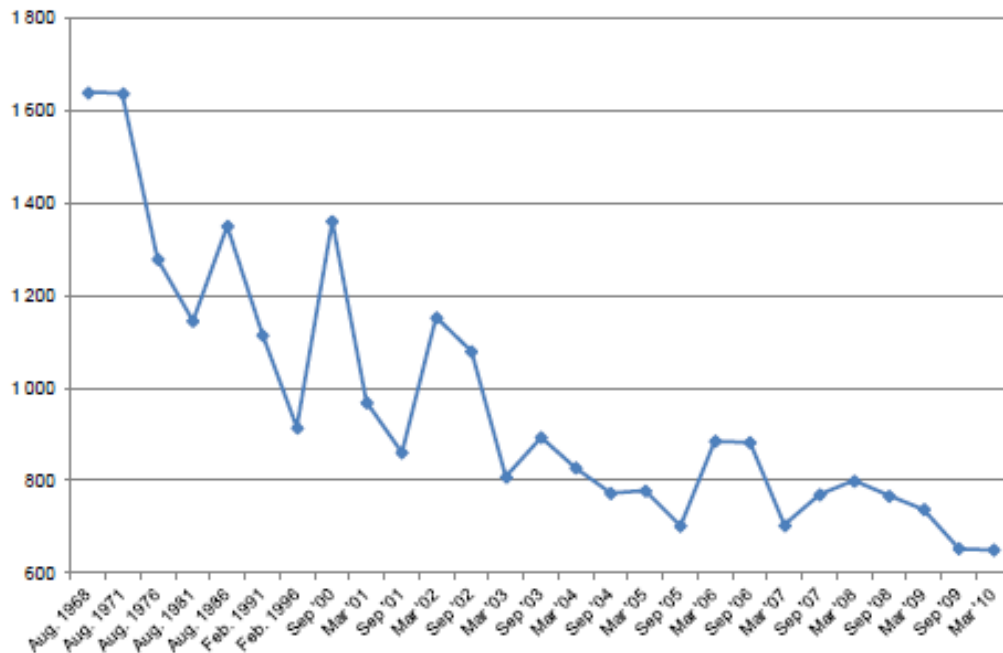


Figure 8.1: employees in South Africa's agricultural sector since 1968 (Sandrey et al., 2011).

The abundance of labourers and the lack of work, combined with the limited amount of resources the government has to monitor and inspect environmental and labour regulations, has led to a situation in which much tension exists between farm owners and farm workers (Ewert, 2012; cf. Human Rights Watch, 2012). Besides large-scale strikes there have been frequent reports of illegal evictions, illegitimate hiring and shedding processes, and human rights abuses.

Wildlife Politics

Morgan Robertson observed that neoliberal nature is often understood to operate outside the formal state by means of free-market instruments and supportive non-governmental flanking mechanisms. In practice however, Robertson shows it has led to numerous 'stakeholder forums', where bureaucrats and business partners team up to discuss and implement market-led environmental governance (Robertson, 2007, p. 504). In the section on wildlife politics (Chapter VI&VII) I attempted to grasp the concept of neoliberal nature by asking how changes in wildlife policy are brought about in a political force field, and what roles stakeholder forums play in this process. To do so, I adapted a discursive perspective which emphasizes the role of language, arguments and narratives in the shaping and legitimizing of policy (P. Dickson & Adams, 2009, p. 113; Hajer & Versteeg, 2005). I broadly distinguish between three parties, namely government, industry and civil society organisations and, on closer examinations,

attempt to show how these groups are internally fragmented and how different discourse coalitions are created between individuals and clusters.

Firstly, contextually, I showed how wildlife authority in South Africa has been shifting organizationally as well as spatially. The country changed its governance structure in 1994 when Mandela's ANC was elected to lead government. By spatially redividing the country, nine provinces were established and thereby nine new environmental structures were superimposed on the existing provincial and homeland conservation institutions. Because government announced a new superseding national environmental framework (breaking away from the previous government structure which gave provinces authority), different sets of legislation were not aligned and are until today deemed confusing by virtually all stakeholders. Pressure to implement the national framework has been extended a) by these frustrations, b) by international environmental conventions that South Africa signed, c) by a steadily increasing wildlife industry which has to abide by environmental legislation and d) by a variety of environmental activists who attempt to pressurize the existing institutional framework. A politically inclined organizational field has thereby emerged in which organizations attempt to influence, modify, abolish, or create institutions. As institutional power is moving from provinces to the National Department of Environmental Affairs, this force field is spatially establishing itself in Pretoria. This goes paired with the formation of field configuring events such as the Wildlife Forum, a discursive social organization in which persons assemble to discuss and tinker with the field's standards and institutions.

What can be said generally about the membership to this FCE is that it upholds a strong established group of insiders from initiation and is not easily accessible to outsiders. It upholds strong borders particularly towards external actors that fall outside the sphere of government, industry and hunting organisations. As the Forum's 'institutional logic' is produced in a utilitarian manner by the field participants, it favours those who are involved and holds back those who are not. The definition of the Wildlife Forum and its make-up has thereby been translated from being broadly inclusive in founding documents to an 'industry forum' in its actual composition. Its boundaries are defined rigidly on the basis of strict requirements, although these definitions seem weak inside the forum. Topics that go beyond the strictly defined jurisdiction of wildlife or conservation policy, such as racial transformation, labour issues but also animal welfare, may be reasons for outsiders to be kept out, while being considered for discussion internally.

By means of organisational and discursive restructuring government and industry actors have promoted a narrative that endorses both government's conservation and industry's

development interests. Business has thereby been endowed with a privileged position through which environmental policy ‘can be shaped in ways that accommodate the interests of capital accumulation and seek to control the conditions under which regulation is imposed’ (MacDonald, 2010b, p. 531). Thereby, I argue that the exclusion of narratives in an FCE can institutionalize a bias of inequality that affects the broader organizational field.

Final words

By looking at the privatization of wildlife from various angles this dissertation shows that South Africa’s wild animals are increasingly defined as financially attractive resources. They are seen as highly mobile, self-reproducing survival machines that are adapted to the country’s land, climate and biodiversity. By removing threats to their existence – such as predators, poachers or diseases – and applying various domestication practices, game reserves are capable of producing surplus biomass effortlessly. What distinguishes game from traditional farm animals is that human predators are willing to pay not only for the corporeal resource, but also for ‘experiencing’ wild animals and removing them from the land. In this way, the animals can be knotted into capital flows multiple times. The ecotourist pays for the experience of seeing the animal, the trophy hunter buys the experience of hunting and killing the animal, game-capture teams pay to translocate animals or cull surplus creatures for meat, the abattoir buys the carcasses of the animal, taxidermists pay a commission for the skin and horns of the animal, tourists buy leftover body parts that are produced into ornaments and employees accept residual meat as partial wages.

More than ever, South African wild animals now *are* commodities; an increasing list of species may be kept, sold, traded, and consumed, but they are distinct from most other commodities in terms of control. One cannot merely keep a wild animal on a shelf, in a box, or ship it to any place in the world. Strict restrictions apply in terms of usage, production, consumption, and trade. Wild animals are understood to be entities that have certain freedom and even certain entitlement to land. Man may be seen as their steward, but they are also acknowledged as intrinsic beings that deserve space now their land is being parcelled and their numbers are waning. Keeping wildlife on land that is not large enough is seen as bad practice, an inhumane treatment of beings. Provisions for wild property hereby cook up a paradoxical concoction: one must respect the wildness of an animal, while also showing the intention to own it. The result of this seeming contradiction is a system that insists on borders that are high and strong enough to incarcerate any animal, while also insisting on substantial terrain that

respects their fugitive nature. Wild property therefore is exclusive; only those who can afford large tracts of land and can erect costly electrified fences are to be owners. They can enjoy relatively high turnovers as well as significant side-effects related to aesthetics, privacy, and protection. The fortified borders of a game farm, as well as the presence of dangerous animals, guns and guards, contribute to a sense of human security in a country that is recognized for its prevalent physical crime. In South Africa's post-Apartheid state wild animals are thereby taking on new roles as proxies to legitimate land ownership. Their containment may be costly and inflexible, but it endows owners with an impressive strongbox that can be subsidized through public-private partnerships with conservation officials. Guided by conservation decrees, owning wildlife thus does not only legitimize the possession of large tracts of fenced land, it also legitimizes a particular wilderness landscape that is void of domestic animals, crops, houses and humans.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
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| ANC | African National Congress |
| ARA | Animal Rights Africa |
| BB-BEE | Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment |
| BEE | Black Economic Empowerment |
| CAE | Certificate of Adequate Enclosure |
| CBD | Convention on Biological Diversity |
| CBNRM | Community Based Natural Resource Management |
| CHASA | Confederation of Hunting Associations of Southern Africa |
| CITES | Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species |
| DA | Democratic Alliance |
| DEA | Department of Environmental Affairs |
| DEAT | Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism |
| DoA | Department of Agriculture |
| DWEA | Department of Water and Environmental Affairs |
| ECGMA | Eastern Cape Game Management Association |
| EWT | Endangered Wildlife Trust |
| FF+ | Freedom Front Plus |
| GEAR | Growth with Equity and Redistribution |
| IFAW | International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| IUCN | International Union for the Conservation of Nature |
| KNP | Kruger National Park |
| KZN | Kwazulu Natal |
| MEC | Minister's Executive Council (Provincial) |
| MinMEC | Platform of the Minister and MECs from all nine provinces |
| MinTEC | Platform of the Minister and Technical Committee from all nine provinces |
| NEMA | National Environmental Management Act |
| NEMBA | National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act of 2004 |
| NGO | Non Governmental Organisation |
| NP | National Party |
| NPB | Natal Parks Board |
| NSPCA | National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals |
| PHASA | Professional Hunting Association of South Africa |
| RDP | Reconstruction and Development Program |
| RSA | Republic of South Africa |
| SABC | South African Broadcasting Service |
| SADC | Southern African Development Community |
| SADF | Southern African Defence Force |
| SANBI | South Africa National Biodiversity Institute |
| SANParks | South Africa National Parks |
| UNEP | United Nations Environment Programme |
| WAHASA | Wildlife and Hunting Associations of South Africa |
| WBLU | Wildlife-Based Land Use |
| WRSA | Wildlife Ranching South Africa |

Politiek Dier – Nederlandse Samenvatting

In de meeste landen is privébezit van wild of het commercialiseren ervan niet legaal. Dieren die niet gedomesticeerd zijn worden wettelijk gezien als *res nullius* en worden door de staat beheerd. In Zuid Afrika heeft echter een bijzondere beleidsverschuiving plaatsgevonden nadat experimenteren met het verhandelen van wild leidden tot financiële successen. Bekrachtigd door nieuwe wetten hebben landeigenaren sinds het begin van de jaren negentig de mogelijkheid om eigenaar te worden over het wild op hun land. Inmiddels wordt door naar schatting 9500 wildboeren een zesde van Zuid Afrika gebruikt voor jachtpraktijken, wildvleesproductie, ecotoerisme of het fokken van wild. Omdat men slechts eigenaar van wild kan zijn door wildhekken te plaatsen, betekent dit dat meer dan 5000 km² land in een relatief korte tijd is afgebakend met hekken van 2,40 meter hoog. Er is weinig studie gedaan naar dit onderwerp, maar de bestaande literatuur toont aan dat naast wildboeren het merendeel van de conventionele boeren eveneens geld verdient aan wild. Een manager van de WRSA (de belangenvereniging voor wildboeren) vertelde dat er ‘geen vrij wild meer is in Zuid Afrika; misschien zijn er een paar bokjes en wat impala, maar tenminste 95% van het is wild is in bezit van individuen’ (Interview A. Pretorius, 2008).

Deze landconversies naar wildboerderijen vinden plaats gedurende significante politieke en economische transitities in de Zuid Afrikaans landbouw sector. Met de opkomst van grootschalige productie systemen en een afname van subsidies na de afschaffing van Apartheid, namen landbouwmarges in de jaren '90 af en zijn traditionele boerderijen in de problemen geraakt. Blanke landeigenaren en vooral grootgrondbezitters zijn tevens uit de gratie geraakt bij zowel de bevolking als de overheid. Omdat wildparken veel land opeisen en een specifieke blauwdruk hebben die onbewoonde en ongerepte natuur predikt zorgt deze verschuiving voor veel spanningen in een land dat een grote rurale en agrarische bevolking heeft. Commerciële exploitatie van wild wordt hierdoor vaak weggezet als een exclusieve ‘blanke’ vorm van landgebruik die tot uitsluiting leidt. In de media worden private wildparken regelmatig geschetst als private dierentuinen of speeltuinen voor een geprivilegieerde elite. Dit beeld wordt versterkt doordat Zuid Afrika een fragiel proces van landhervorming doorloopt, waarin gepoogd wordt de geschiedenis van blanke landbezetting in de twintigste eeuw terug te draaien.¹²⁰ Dit proces, dat weinig successen kent, heeft als doel Zuid Afrika's land voor een grotere groep mensen toegankelijk te maken. Wildeigenaarschap leidt echter tot consolidatie

¹²⁰ De beruchte Land Wet van 1913 leidde er bijvoorbeeld toe dat 87 procent van Zuid Afrika's oppervlakte exclusief door de blanke bevolking werd opgeëist.

van land omdat het niet mogelijk is een wildbedrijf op te zetten zonder grote stukken land en private wildparken zijn gemiddeld genomen dan ook aanzienlijk groter dan traditionele boerderijen.

De conversies naar wildboerderijen worden in dit werk beschreven als twee soorten verschuivingen die onlosmakelijk met elkaar verbonden zijn; een materiële verschuiving en een politiek-legale verschuiving. Met de materiële verschuiving wordt bedoeld op de nieuwe eigendomsverdeling van Zuid Afrika's land waarbij gedomesticeerde dieren vervangen worden door wilde dieren, boeren zich omscholen door professionele jagers, gewassen vervangen worden door de bush, schrikdraad vervangen wordt door hoge streng beveiligde wildhekken, en landarbeiders worden vervangen door jachtassistenten en horecapersoneel. De politiek-legale verschuiving is minder zichtbaar. In officiële documenten veranderen wilde dieren in veeteelt, veranderen 'ongedierte' in 'bedreigde diersoorten', en worden soorten die eens verboden waren om te jagen nu gefokt om deze te kunnen jagen. Vrijwel alle dieren die als wild doorgingen zijn in de laatste paar decennia verstrikt geraakt in nieuwe eigendomsclausules. Dit onderzoek kijkt welke stakeholders betrokken zijn bij deze politieke verschuivingen, hoe deze zich tot elkaar verhouden en welke sociale gevolgen de privatisering van wild heeft. Theoretisch draagt het op deze manier bij aan wetenschappelijke debatten over overheidsclassificaties, privatisering van natuur en de creatie van 'nieuwe naturen'.

Vraagstelling en methode

Om de vraag te beantwoorden hoe wild officieel geclassificeerd wordt in Zuid Afrika en welke sociale gevolgen dit heeft zijn vier onderzoekslijnen uitgezet:

- Hoe is Zuid Afrika's regelgeving omtrent eigendom van wild historisch en politiek ontstaan en welke gevolgen hadden de politieke verschuivingen tijdens de transitie naar democratie in 1994 op deze regelgeving?
- Wat zijn de drijfveren achter de conversies naar wildgerelateerd landgebruik?
- Welke spelers opereren in het politieke krachtenveld omtrent wildbeheer en hoe verhouden deze zich tot elkaar?
- Welke perspectieven hebben beleidsmakers, wildproducenten en wildvertegenwoordigers op de relatie tussen de wildsector en rurale ontwikkeling?

Ik zal kort aandacht besteden aan de methodiek en het veldwerk en vervolgens per vraag samenvattend ingaan op de bevindingen. De laatste vraag wordt niet apart behandeld, maar is geïntegreerd in iedere paragraaf.

Van februari 2008 tot maart 2011 heb ik 135 respondenten ondervraagd, 62 interviews opgenomen en 15 wildboerderijen onderzocht in de Oostkaap. In januari 2009 ben ik voor meer dan een jaar naar Zuid Afrika afgereisd en heb ik mijn onderzoekstijd verdeeld tussen twee veldwerklocaties: Pretoria en de Cacadu-regio in de Oostkaap. In Pretoria bestudeerde ik het krachtenveld waarin wildbeleid wordt gecreëerd door met ambtenaren, politici, belangenvertegenwoordigers en wetenschappers mee te lopen en ze te interviewen. Via het Ministerie van Milieuzaken en Tourisme ben ik uitgenodigd om gedurende mijn verblijf in Zuid Afrika aan het Wild Forum deel te nemen. Dit overleg vindt vier keer per jaar plaats en heeft als doel om alle belangenvertegenwoordigers en de overheid samen te brengen om wildbeleid op te stellen en te toetsen.

De Cacadu-regio is uitgekozen omdat het een grote rurale populatie kent, een bijzonder hoog aantal wildboerderijen heeft en één van de meest arme regio's van Zuid Afrika is. De provinciale overheid heeft bovendien het hoogste aantal jaagbare diersoorten van het land vastgesteld en stimuleert de sector actief. Door op omvang en het business model (ecotourisme of jachtboerderij) te selecteren zijn 15 boerderijen uitgekozen waar ik interviews hield met zowel de eigenaars, de managers, en het personeel. Hiernaast heb ik een opleiding (van de Eastern Cape Game Management Association) gedaan om professionele jager te worden. Door twee weken lang met twintig toekomstige professionele jagers op een boerderij verblijven kon ik het vertrouwen winnen van respondenten, de taal van de jachtindustrie leren, en integreren in de wildgemeenschap.

Historische tendensen

Als we naar Zuid Afrika's geschiedenis van wildbeheer kijken krijgen we een diffuus en complex plaatje te zien waarin een aantal duidelijke rode draden te herleiden zijn. Dit werk toont dat wilde dieren altijd onderdeel geweest zijn van een politiek machtsspel waarbij actoren met politiek, sociaal, of economisch kapitaal hebben geprobeerd om controle te krijgen over wild door anderen te beperken in hun toegang tot deze bronnen. Een belangrijke manier om dit te doen was door wilde dieren in diverse vloeibare beleids categorieën te gieten. Vanaf het moment dat de VOC voet aan wal zette in de Kaap, werden wilde dieren het onderwerp van een reeks herclassificaties; carnivoren werden tot ongedierte bestempeld en moesten worden

afgeschoten, terwijl soorten die populair waren onder de welgestelden moesten worden beschermd. Zodra het bedrijf en later de koloniale administratie beseftte dat ze niet konden voorkomen dat personen wild gebruikten voor eigen gewin, werden economische beleidsinstrumenten zoals belastingheffing, jachtvergunningen, premies en transporttarieven ingezet.

Een belangrijke alliantie die in dit werk steeds terugkomt is de alliantie tussen landeigenaren en de staat. Landeigenaren steunden plannen om de natuur te behouden, terwijl de staat grondeigenaren van belastingen vrijstelde, in ruil voor hun steun. De ‘game laws’ van 1886, die gericht waren op het beschermen van natuur en land door toegang van burgers te beperken, bieden een historisch voorbeeld. Grondeigenaren die deze reeks wetten steunden ontvingen in ruil hiervoor allerlei vrijheden, zoals het recht om zonder vergunning dieren te jagen, het recht om dieren te cultiveren, te verkopen, te doneren, en (met vrienden en familieleden) gedurende het hele jaar te mogen jagen. Ambtenaren kregen hiervoor de nodige steun om aanzienlijke successen te boeken bij het instellen van natuurparken, evenals bij het doorvoeren van nieuwe jachtwetgeving.

Rond 1965, toen de Kaapprovincie haar natuurbeleid heroverwoog, werd deze lijn opnieuw maar op een meer exclusieve en raciaal uitsluitende wijze bekrachtigd. Zwarte Afrikanen werden daardoor expliciet uitgesloten van de jacht, handel, en het bezit van wilde dieren. Sommige beleidsformuleringen waren openlijk racistisch, hoewel beperkingen meestal indirect werden ingesteld door bijvoorbeeld een verbod in te stellen op het gebruik van bepaald land, op vuurwapens (of andere jachtmethoden), of door in wetten te verwijzen naar familiebanden. Omdat Afrikanen geen vuurwapens mochten bezitten en jagen met vuurwapens als de enige ‘humane’ manier van jagen werd erkend werden ze neergezet als illegale stropers in plaats van jagers. Grondbezitters daarentegen werden door de staat erkend als belangrijke natuurbeschermers. Om dit te eren werd een systeem bedacht waarbij grondeigenaren opnieuw werden vrijgesteld van de meeste vergunningen. Ze konden hierdoor jachtseizoenen negeren en dieren naar vrije wil vermarkten, verkopen of schenken.

Uiteindelijk zijn dergelijke provinciale regelingen vastgelegd in de nationale ‘Game Theft Act’ van 1991. Hierdoor kregen grondeigenaren die hekken van 2,4 meter om hun grond heen zetten absolute eigendomsrechten over wilde dieren op hun land. Dit gaf boeren aanzienlijke rijkdom, maar heeft het op de lange duur ook mogelijk gemaakt om wilde dieren te erkennen als financiële producten, die op legale wijze als activa konden worden verhandeld. Dergelijke wetgeving versterkte impliciet de grip van boeren op hun land, en verzwakte

gelijktijdig de positie van niet-blanken om zowel grond te bezitten of wilde dieren te consumeren.

Drijfveren

De politieke overgang van 1994 was in veel opzichten een breekpunt met het verleden. Een nieuwe democratische regering koos nieuwe doelstellingen zoals de aanpak van armoede, ongelijkheid, landhervorming, en gaf gehoor aan (internationale) oproepen om biodiversiteit te behouden. Als gevolg van de deregulering en privatisering van de landbouwmarkt en de daling van (landbouw)subsidies werden landeigenaren gedwongen om zich te herpositioneren in de samenleving. Dit onderzoek laat zien dat ze dit onder andere deden door te ‘biodiversifiëren’, door hun productielijnen te diversifiëren door nieuwe bio-entiteiten op te nemen, of bestaande bio-entiteiten zo te configureren dat productie mogelijk werd. De toename aan wildboerderijen in de jaren ’90 illustreert dit en de gevolgen zijn grootschalige ruimtelijke verschuivingen in het landschap van Zuid Afrika. Land werd verkocht, aangekocht, en samengevoegd en alle landbouw en menselijke sporen werden verwijderd om het afgebakende land te ‘verwilden’. Zuid Afrika’s grenzen openden in deze tijd en het land werd overspoeld door toeristen, buitenlandse investeringen, internationale markten, nieuwe regels en ook nieuwe ideeën over de natuur.

Hoewel ik in het proefschrift aantoon hoe wet en regelgeving omtrent wildbeheer een grote impact heeft op de transformatie van Zuid Afrika’s landschap en samenleving, gaven landeigenaren dit zelden op als drijfveer om over te schakelen op wild. Niet milieubeleid of nieuwe eigendoms wetten, maar geld kwam in eerste instantie terug als belangrijke drijfveer. Sommigen gaven toe geen geld te verdienen met hun land, maar hielden het land aan voor een aantrekkelijke levensstijl waarbij natuur en rust centraal stonden. Door door te vragen heb ik naast deze persoonlijke motieven drie andere dimensies in kaart gebracht die een belang speelden bij de conversies; land hervorming, veiligheidsredenen, en arbeidshervorming.

In de jaren ’90 ontstond een steeds sneller groeiende wildindustrie, die gepaard ging met stijgende prijzen voor wildboerderijen en voor wild. Twee voorbeelden. In 1987 werd de recordprijs van 7000 Rand neergelegd voor een sabelantilope. In 2012 legde een koper 12,2 miljoen Rand neer voor een dergelijk dier. Terwijl de gemiddelde prijs van buffels in 1995 5000 Rand was, kreeg een verkoper in 2012 20 miljoen Rand voor een buffel en haar kalf. In hoofdstuk V laat ik zien dat deze toename in prijzen een brede trend is. Zuid Afrika heeft inmiddels de grootste jachtindustrie van het continent en alleen al haar wildfoksector is

miljarden Randen per jaar waard. Om nog eens de link met milieubeleid te maken is er geen land waar zoveel diersoorten bejaagd mogen worden als in Zuid Afrika. Door het fokken van wild te faciliteren ontstaat er tevens een heel nieuw palet aan dieren (zoals de golden gnu, chocolate impala, of Oostkaap kudu, zie hoofdstuk V voor inzicht in deze praktijken). Alhoewel er geen centrale statistieken zijn toont mijn onderzoek dat veel wildreservaten worden gefinancierd door internationale investeerders en vooral bezocht worden door internationale welgestelde klanten.

Naast financiële motieven was rurale veiligheid een belangrijke thematiek die bij vrijwel al mijn respondenten terugkwam. Naast de insluiting van kostbare dieren en een eigendomsclaim hierop zorgen de zwaarbeveiligde grenzen van wildboerderijen voor buitensluiting van ongewenste dieren en mensen. Stropers en roofdieren worden buitengesloten, en in een land met hoge rurale criminaliteit, geeft het bedrijfsmodel van wildboerderijen een verhoogde bescherming middels wapens, beveiligers, en robuuste hekken. Een wildboerderij stelt de eigenaar in staat een groot stuk grond te hebben met wilde en gevaarlijke dieren, verhoogde en soms geëlektrificeerde hekken, huizen met dubbele hekken, 24/7 bemande beveiliging, prikkeldraad, schrikdraad, bewapende patrouilles, de mogelijkheid om interne wegen te controleren en af te sluiten, en een voorraad wapens te hebben die legaal gehouden mogen worden ten behoeve van natuurbescherming.

Het eerder genoemde landhervormingsbeleid is een andere belangrijke beweegreden voor grondbezitters om met wildboeren te beginnen danwel hun land te verkopen. Ik ga in op de verschillende landhervormingsprogramma's, land restitutie en land redistributie en bespreek de manieren waarop wildboerden hier tegenaan kijken. Daarnaast maak ik het punt dat het wetenschappelijke en publieke debat over landhervorming meer aandacht zou moeten hebben voor milieubeleid omdat er door milieubeleid zowel onteigeningen plaatsvinden als dat land gevrijwaard wordt van onteigeningen. Tijdens de grootse politieke en sociale veranderingen is het opmerkelijk om te zien dat de alliantie tussen grondeigenaren en het departement van Milieuzaken aanhield. Regels met betrekking tot natuurbehoud die zijn gemaakt tijdens de apartheid zijn ongewijzigd gebleven. De trends om fauna te privatiseren, natuurbehoud te dereguleren en vervolgens via publiek private samenwerkingscontracten te herreguleren werd versterkt door middel van nieuwe milieuwetgeving. Een goed voorbeeld hiervan zijn de beschreven stewardship-programma's (hoofdstuk IV), die de private controle over wild en land waarop wild leeft versterkt door het delegeren van staatstaken. Een belangrijke reden voor de staat om dit te doen is de gebrek aan financiering die zij heeft voor natuurbehoud; samenwerking met landeigenaren wordt gezien als een kosten-effectief mechanisme voor de

overheid om haar natuurbewaringsmandaat uit te voeren en haar internationaal vastgestelde doelstellingen inzake biodiversiteit en gebiedsbeschermingen te behalen. Zuid Afrika heeft zich te houden aan internationale verdragen die zij sloot omtrent natuurbehoud en is gedwongen om meer beschermde gebieden op te leveren. Een manier om dit te doen is door samen te werken met landeigenaren en ze economische prikkels - zoals fiscale aftrek voor het verwijderen van uitheemse soorten of fiscale aftrek van de landwaarde via het belastbaar inkomen – te bieden.

Tot slot ga ik in op de hervorming van de arbeidsmarkt die veel teweeg brengt. Wildparken en dan vooral jachtboerderijen geven grondbezitters de mogelijkheid minder mensen per hectare in dienst te hebben, en geven argumenten om mensen niet meer op het land te laten wonen zoals veelal gebruikelijk is in het rurale Zuid Afrika. Omdat prijzen voor wildboerderijen veel hoger zijn dan grond van conventionele boerderijen is het bovendien aantrekkelijk geworden om met dergelijk land te speculeren en blijven wildboerderijen veelal buiten het schot van landhervorming. Aangezien de overheid land marktconform dient aan te schaffen is het aantrekkelijke normale boerderijen te kopen, waar bovendien meer geschikte infrastructuur aanwezig is.

De veelheid aan rurale arbeidskrachten en het gebrek aan werk, in combinatie met het gebrek aan capaciteit die de overheid heeft om arbeidsregels na te gaan heeft geleid tot een situatie waarin veel frictie bestaat tussen boeren en landwerkers. Dit proefschrift geeft een inkijk in deze frictie en frequent gerapporteerde illegale uitzettingen, illegaal werk, en mensenrechtenschendingen in de context van wildconversies.

Wildpolitiek

In de sectie over wildpolitiek (hoofdstuk VI en VII) probeer ik te begrijpen hoe besluitvorming over natuurbeleid plaatsvindt in een politiek krachtenveld. Om dit te doen, hanteer ik een discursief perspectief waarin de rol van taal, argumenten en verhalen bij de vormgeving en legitimering van het beleid worden benadrukt (P. Dickson & Adams, 2009, blz 113; Hajer & Versteeg, 2005). Ik maak in eerste instantie onderscheid tussen drie partijen - de overheid, het bedrijfsleven en maatschappelijke organisaties – en laat bij nader onderzoek zien hoe deze groepen intern zijn gefragmenteerd en hoe er verschillende ‘discourse coalities’ ontstaan tussen individuen en clusters.

In dit blok toon ik ten eerste hoe de discussie over wildbeheer in Zuid-Afrika zowel organisatorisch als ruimtelijk aan het verschuiven is. Het land veranderde in 1994 haar

governance-structuur toen Mandela's ANC werd verkozen om de regering te leiden. Door een ruimtelijk herverdeling van het land werden negen nieuwe provincies en daarmee negen nieuwe milieu-instituten gecreëerd. Na frustraties en kritieken van landeigenaren, door de opkomst van internationale milieuverdragen en door een sterk groeiende wildsector was uiteindelijk de noodzaak om nationaal te gaan opereren en een eerste kaderwet voor milieu op te zetten, de NEMBA. Niet provincies, maar het nationale ministerie van milieuzaken kreeg hiermee een vooraanstaande positie in het wilddebat en dit ging gepaard met de vorming van een krachtveld in Pretoria: alle provinciale stakeholders trokken naar de politieke hoofdstad en verenigden zich in landelijke organisaties. In de vorming van dit veld is het Wild Forum ontstaan, een landelijk overlegstructuur tussen relevante stakeholders op het gebied van wildbeheer dat ik meer dan een jaar bijwoonde.

Hoewel het forum initieel werd gecreëerd als een breed platform voor allerlei stakeholders is het in zijn vertaling naar de praktijk uitgegroeid tot een 'industrieforum'. Een gevestigde groep bepaalt het lidmaatschap en kan deelname van buitenstaanders blokkeren. Wetenschappers, dierenwelzijnsorganisaties, vakbonden en andere actoren buiten de overheid en de jachtindustrie zijn over het algemeen buiten gesloten van dit platform. Het aansnijden van onderwerpen zoals raciale transformatie, arbeidsvraagstukken maar ook dierenwelzijn, kan in de toelatingsprocedure een reden zijn om buitenstaanders te weren, terwijl het goed mogelijk is dat deze onderwerpen in het forum zelf wel besproken worden en tot besluitvorming kunnen leiden. De jachtindustrie heeft hierdoor een bevoorrechte positie om milieubeleid te vormen en Zuid Afrika's fauna te classificeren. In deze sectie ga ik theoretisch in op de rol van stakeholdersplatforms in een breder organisatorisch veld en kijk naar de vertaling van narratieven binnen en buiten de overlegstructuur. Ik toon aan dat intransparantie en uitsluiting van narratieven in een stakeholdersplatform ongelijkheid teweeg kan brengen in het bredere organisatorische veld en nadelige sociale gevolgen kan hebben.

Tot slot

Door verschillende lenzen toe te passen toont dit proefschrift dat Zuid-Afrika's wilde dieren steeds meer gedefinieerd worden als financieel aantrekkelijke bronnen. Ze worden door landeigenaren gezien als zeer mobiele, zelf-reproducerende overlevingsmachines die zijn aangepast aan het land en het klimaat. Door directe bedreigingen voor hun bestaan - zoals roofdieren, stropers of ziekten - te verwijderen en door landbouwpraktijken toe te passen, produceren wildreservaten gemakkelijk biomassa en meerwaarde. Wat wildboerderijen

onderscheidt van traditionele boerderijen is dat mensen niet alleen bereid zijn te betalen voor de karkassen van wilde dieren, maar ook betalen voor de 'ervaring' om bij wilde dieren te zijn en om ze zelf te doden. Op deze manier kunnen de dieren in meerdere markten verknoot worden. De ecotoerist betaalt voor de ervaring om een dier te zien en op een wildreservaat te verblijven, de jager koopt de jachtervaring, wildteams betalen om het overschot aan dieren te vangen en te transporteren naar slachthuizen, het slachthuis koopt de karkassen, vakmannen betalen een commissie om de huid en de hoorns van het dier op te zetten, toeristen kopen overgebleven lichaamsdelen die tot ornamenten en souvenirs zijn gemaakt, en het overgebleven vlees wordt op verschillende plekken als loonelement aan arbeiders uitgekeerd.

Meer dan ooit zijn Zuid-Afrikaanse wilde dieren hierbij tot commoditeiten geworden; een steeds grotere lijst diersoorten kan door landbezitters worden beheerd, verkocht, verhandeld en geconsumeerd. Het verschil met andere producten is echter dat men niet zomaar een wild dier kan houden, of ze zomaar naar iedere plaats ter wereld kan sturen; voor het houden en verhandelen van wild gelden strikte beperkingen. Wilde dieren worden gezien als intrinsieke entiteiten die bepaalde vrijheden hebben en waarvoor grond moet worden vrijgemaakt. Het houden van wilde dieren op land dat niet groot genoeg is, is niet legaal. De paradox in het Zuid Afrikaanse bestel is dat men de 'wildheid' van een dier moet respecteren, terwijl men ook de intentie moet tonen om ze te bezitten. Het resultaat van deze schijnbare tegenstrijdigheid is een systeem dat aandringt op hekken die hoog en sterk genoeg zijn om elk dier in te sluiten, maar ze ook van een substantieel terrein voorziet zodat hun voortvluchtigheid wordt gerespecteerd. Wildbeheer is om die reden een exclusieve bezigheid; alleen degenen die zich grote stukken land kunnen veroorloven mogen wildeigenaren zijn. Deze bevolkingsgroep kan genieten van een relatief lucratief bedrijfsmodel en aanzienlijke voordelen met betrekking tot privacy en bescherming. De insluiting van wild kan kostbaar en inflexibel zijn, maar het schenkt eigenaren een indrukwekkende 'woonkluus' die gedeeltelijk kan worden gesubsidieerd door middel van publiek-private samenwerkingsverbanden. Het bezitten van dieren legitimeert zo niet alleen het bezit van grote stukken omheind terrein, het legitimeert ook de inrichting van land volgens een bepaalde wildernis-visie waar vee, gewassen, bebouwing en andere mensen geen plek hebben.

About the Author

Dhoya Snijders was born on November 15th 1981 to a Dutch father and an Irish mother. He studied Culture, Organization and Management at the VU University Amsterdam and won the departmental thesis award for his thesis 'Making haste slowly' about affirmative action on the South African labour market. In 2007, he completed his second Masters at the University of Amsterdam in political philosophy (cum laude). His thesis 'Much would have more' deals with property rights and distributive and redistributive principles of justice. After working as a part-time journalist and a junior researcher at VU University he embarked on the PhD trajectory which brought about this publication. Dhoya is currently working as a policy advisor in The Hague and is finalizing a postgraduate degree in Public Information Management at the Erasmus University Rotterdam.